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Exploring how design can create opportunities for rich, meaningful and engaging relationships between museums, communities and individuals

by

C Couldwell

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Design
in
Visual Communication Design

Department of Art and Design

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Fall 2012
Edmonton, Alberta

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Exploring how design can create opportunities for rich, meaningful and engaging relationships between museums, communities and individuals

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Master of Design Thesis
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Winter 2012

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Abstract

This research explores how design can create opportunities for rich, meaningful, and engaging relationships between museums, communities and individuals. One method for enhancing these relationships is through visitor engagements. Museums and galleries utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and objects (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs). Visitor engagements work to inspire and educate the audience, connect with the community, and promote the agenda of the museum and exhibition. They are a means of additional sources of contextual and interpretive information beyond the exhibit itself. Interactive and customizable visitor engagements can create relevant connections and enhance independent experiences for museum visitors. This study explores how these connections and relationships can be enriched through independent and participatory engagements. This research involved administering and analyzing surveys, interviews, and workshops, as well as the creation and testing of two artifacts. The research was conducted over a period of 16 months as part of a Master of Design degree.

1.0 Introduction

The objective of this thesis research is to explore how design can create opportunities for rich, meaningful, and engaging relationships between museums, communities and individuals. One method for enhancing these relationships is through visitor engagements. Interactive and personalized visitor engagements can create relevant connections and enhance independent experiences for museum visitors. This research investigates how individualized engagements affect visitor experiences and learning, how they are utilized by the cultural institution, and how they could be created by the community.

Chapter One introduces this document and defines cultural institutions, museums, and visitor engagements. Chapter Two delivers the context for museums in the contemporary world, discusses audience profiles, defines interaction and user-centered design, and looks at current technologies. Chapter Three is an overview of the research, including the research questions, research objectives, and methodology. Chapter Four details the research and explores significant themes discovered. Chapter Five analyzes the research results and discusses their greater implications. Chapter Six concludes this document and offers ideas for further research. Chapter Seven summarizes the exhibition that resulted from this research.

One of the purposes of this document was to support an exhibition at the FAB Gallery in Edmonton, Canada from October 4 to 29, 2011. This exhibition, entitled *Garden of Muses*, summarized the research in this document into six sections, using several didactic panels and interactive displays. The exhibition utilized the physical space of the gallery to further explore the research presented in this document and the didactic information was designed to enable the gallery audience to easily comprehend the research presented. Chapter Seven discusses the exhibition in further detail.

1.1 What is a Cultural Institution?

A cultural institution may be defined as an organization or establishment, whether created through government or by members of a particular culture, as a way to deliver services to the public and to promote an agenda. In its broadest sense, this definition encompasses organizations such as museums, libraries, clubs, community leagues and societies. David Carr, in his introduction to *The Promise of Cultural Institutions*, narrows this definition to libraries and museums. He states, “cultural institutions are places created *to hold* and preserve objects and texts, *to expand* the boundaries of public knowledge associated with those artifacts and words, and *to open* the possibilities of learning in the contexts of everyday life” (Carr xiii). Under Carr’s definition, the primary objectives of a cultural institution are to maintain a collection of artifacts, offer access to these artifacts, and educate the public about their meaning. For the purpose of this document, I will focus on museums as a cultural institution.

1.2 What is a Museum?

A museum is a cultural institution that offers public access to exhibitions and opportunities for learning through artifacts. These institutions include but are not limited to art galleries, science centres, zoos, heritage centres, and historical sites. According to the Canadian Museums Association:

Museums are institutions created in the public interest. They engage their visitors, foster deeper understanding and promote the enjoyment and sharing of authentic cultural and natural heritage. Museums acquire, preserve, research, interpret and exhibit the tangible and intangible evidence of society and nature. As educational institutions, museums provide a physical forum for critical inquiry and investigation. (“Canadian Museums Association”)

For the purpose of this document, a museum’s collection of artifacts may be permanent, in the sense that artifacts are stored on-site for long periods of time, or temporary, as in the case of a public-run art gallery that displays curated exhibitions but does not maintain a permanent collection. A museum is not necessarily contained within a permanent structure, as is the case of public art that is housed within a city’s boundaries rather than a specific building.

1.3 What is a Visitor Engagement?

Museums utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and objects (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs). Visitor engagements work to inspire and educate the audience, connect with the community, and promote the agenda of the museum and exhibition. They are a means for additional sources of contextual and interpretive information beyond the exhibit itself.

1.4 Who Creates Visitor Engagements?

Visitor engagements created by the institution are, in general, designed to be top-down, universal experiences to appeal to all audiences and promote the agenda of the museum and exhibition. Some engagements may include visitor participation or allow for customization by the user. Alternatively, a community of participants may create visitor engagements considered to be outside the institution’s authorization. These types of engagements signify a bottom-up dialogue with the institution and the community.

1.5 Why Create Personalized Visitor Engagements?

Cultural institutions offer visitors the ability to select what they wish to see and experience while exploring an exhibition. They offer “enduring memories and benefits, lasting changes in individuals, which result from highly engaging and

personalized experiences” (Falk and Dierking 76). As such, cultural institutions should “engage people in educationally enjoyable experiences from which they take their own personal meaning” (Falk and Dierking 76). Since personal experience is instrumental to rich and engaging learning experiences, visitor engagements should strive to deliver meaningful connections for visitors.

A design approach that enables institutions and community members to create personalized visitor engagements allows them to capture and present information in innovative ways. As a result, visitors have an enhanced experience that may impact their lives and their relationship with the cultural institution.

2.0 Context

2.1 The Changing Landscape for Museums

Museums have evolved and changed since their early incarnations as Victorian cabinets of curiosities. Pristine modernist museums, built on concepts such as universal design and access, usurped the privately-held collections of the Victorian era. The postmodernist era saw a shift in paradigms concerning museum documentation, “the rejection of the existence of an inherent objective truth replaced instead by the belief in the arbitrariness of the singular, authoritative interpretations; that interpretation is seen as a construct by a given theorist/author; and that knowledge is a tradable commodity, that is not fixed or closed but constantly evolving and contextually specific” (Cameron 83).

Museums once again shifted focus with the advent of the blockbuster exhibition. “Thomas Hoving, Director of New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met) from 1967 to 1977, invented the museum blockbuster— large, popular, expensive exhibitions with aggressive marketing and museum gift shop tie-ins and product sales that often paid for the shows” (Brennan). One could argue that the blockbuster exhibition paved the way for the destination museum, a relatively new concept that sees cities attempt to revitalize by building a culturally iconic museum. The Bilbao Guggenheim Museum, opened in 1997, is a well-known example of a destination museum that succeeded in revitalizing a stagnating economy and worked to make Bilbao an internationally recognized center for culture. Communities around the world have attempted to emulate Bilbao’s accomplishment through the design and implementation of their own destination museums (Newhouse 278).

2.2 Technologies in a Museum Context

Communication with museums has shifted dramatically with the explosion of social media and mobile technology. A few years ago, a static website would be enough of a presence online to satisfy visitors. Now, museums are communicating with their audience through social media such as Twitter and blogs. The museum audience is empowered to reveal their own opinions about museums and exhibitions publicly through their own blogs and Twitter updates, and potentially in real-time while they are in the museum space through mobile technologies.

Mobile devices, particularly smartphones like the iPhone and touch screen tablets like the iPad, have become a prevalent form of communication. According to the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association, at the end of March 2011, Canadian wireless phone subscribers numbered 24.7 million and approximately 75% of households in Canada have access to the wireless phone. “Mobile broadband subscriptions in Canada totaled 5,668,142 as of June 2010, which represents 24.2% of total wireless subscriptions. Of the total mobile broadband subscribers, 86% were subscribers with a smartphone voice/data plan (“CTWA”). In the smartphone category, the iPhone has an 86% of the market share in Canada as of February 2010

(Parker). These devices are being used in a museum context to deliver information about exhibitions to visitors.

2.3 Museums in Edmonton

Edmonton is seeing dramatic changes in its cultural institutions. New space will be constructed for the Royal Alberta Museum for 2015, which will see its location move downtown with expanded space for exhibitions. The World of Science is expanding with a “new \$7 million, 16,000 square-foot gallery that will allow the foundation to bring a wider array of travelling exhibits exploring science and technology to the city” (“Government of Alberta News Release”). Fort Edmonton Park and the Valley Zoo are implementing expansion projects. Edmonton’s Percent for Arts Program, created in 1991, is gaining more submissions from high-caliber artists and is becoming recognized by the residents of the city through its dynamic artworks such as the “Immense Mode” installation at the Southgate Transit Station.

The newly renovated Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA) was designed to be a destination museum. The new AGA opened its doors in January 2010 to an increased number of visitors and memberships, and has implemented new visitor engagements such as craft days and late-night parties. The opening of the AGA marked a dramatic increase in gallery attendance. “The number of AGA Members increased to almost 5,300 at the end of 2010 compared to 1,600 the year before – a growth of 700%” (“Art Gallery of Alberta Annual Report”). It also marked a shift in focus for the AGA to become a destination for visitors and an exhibitor of internationally recognized shows. “Initially drawn-in by the iconic architecture of our facility, we find that our visitors stay, and return, because of the high caliber of our programming. The AGA is committed to maintaining the utmost standards with ambitious exhibitions that showcase local, national, and international art, both contemporary and historical” (“Art Gallery of Alberta Annual Report”). The mandate of the AGA is to create connections with its audience. “The AGA is about making connections—connecting you to art, artists, ideas, people, your community, the world, the past, the present, and the future. The AGA is committed to operating in ways that encourage these connections” (“Art Gallery of Alberta Annual Report”).

2.4 Visitor Profiles

In *Ignite the Power of Art*, Bonnie Pitman and Ellen Hirzy defined four types of visitor clusters: Observers, Participants, Independents, and Enthusiasts (Pitman and Hirzy 42). Observers are “somewhat tentative about looking at art” and are least comfortable talking about their experiences (Pitman and Hirzy 44). Participants enjoy the “social aspects of their experiences” and “have a strong knowledge of and interest in art” (Pitman and Hirzy 55). Independents “like to view art on their own and develop their own explanations and interpretation” (Pitman and Hirzy 64). Enthusiasts are “confident, knowledgeable, and enjoy looking at all types of art” and they use a variety of interpretive resources (Pitman and Hirzy 75). For the purpose of this document, these four visitor clusters act as a basis for my research survey questions to visitors. These visitor clusters were selected over other methods of

classifying visitors because the studies completed by the Dallas Museum of Art placed “its emphasis on visitors’ self-expressed preferences and characteristics that describe complex relationships...” (Pitman and Hirzy 21).

3.0 Research Overview

This research stems from my own experience with visitor engagements and my perception that the creation of personalized and interactive visitor engagements is relatively new territory for cultural institutions, particularly smaller museums and galleries. This section explores the relationship between design and research, and states research objectives and methodologies.

3.1 Research Question

Primary Research Question

How can design create opportunities for rich, meaningful, and engaging relationships between museums, communities, and individuals?

Secondary Research Question

How can designing interactive and personalized visitor engagements create relevant connections and enhance independent experiences for museum visitors?

3.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research includes:

- exploring the possibilities for independent and self-directed museum experiences,
- investigating individualized and personalized visitor engagements,
- considering the nature of interaction and participation in the museum environment, and
- examining how encouraging dialogue between museums, communities, and individuals enhances their relationships.

3.3 Design Approaches

One may inquire as to why design is tackling museum visitor engagements as a research area, as opposed to other disciplines such as museums studies or education. Design is an interdisciplinary field that often addresses the needs of other areas. Design is a field that identifies areas that could use enhancement, rather than merely reacting to requests. As stated by Jorge Frascara in *User-Centered Graphic Design*:

“Conversant as designers are with the power and the possibilities of visual communication, beyond reacting to requests for their intervention, which normally come after basic paradigms have been set, they need to also set the paradigms of their activity by identifying and defining areas where visual communication design can make a significant difference in society. Social responsibility is an active, more than reactive concern.

“There are two recognizable areas that make a difference through

communication design: one relates to making life possible, and the other to making life better.” (Frascara, *User-Centred Graphic Design* 20)

In this study, design is being used to define strategies for enhancing the relationship between museums and visitors.

This research benefits museums by demystifying how personalized engagements can be implemented and to explicitly define the awards acquired by visitors who experience them. This research adds to the body of knowledge about museums and visitor interactions. By collecting data and interviews from museum professionals, this research presents real-world information about the goals of the museum in regards to engaging visitors.

This research benefits visitors by ensuring that museums understand the advantages of implementing personalized visitor engagements, creating a richer relationship with the museum. By collecting data from visitors, they are given a voice to express their preferences for visitor engagements.

This research benefits designers by exploring ways in which design can benefit museums and visitors. This study offers various avenues of exploration to designers with an interest in this area and sets out a clear agenda for research upon which designers may build.

This study utilizes several design approaches. These design approaches are interconnected and often overlap in their research methods. The design approaches include visual communication design, user-centered design, participatory design, interaction design, and user-experience design.

Visual Communication Design

As Jorge Frascara states in *Communication Design*, “[V]isual communication design, seen as an activity, is the action of conceiving, programming, projecting, and realizing visual communications that are usually produced through industrial means and are aimed at broadcasting specific messages to specific sectors of the public” (Frascara, *Communication Design* 2). The objective of visual communication design is to communicate messages through interpretation, organization, and presentation of information. This approach calls for a collection and analysis of information to define areas for enhancing communication and project objectives.

In visual communication design, there is an emphasis on evaluating the influence messages have on the audience. “[T]he important issue is not the communication act itself, but the impact that this has on the knowledge, the attitudes, and the behavior of people. This makes clear the need to study the interaction between messages and people...” (Frascara, *Communication Design* 13). The ability to evaluate how the communication has affected the audience is a focus of visual communication design. “Design evaluation is an essential component of professional practice. This is the designers’ opportunity to determine the quality of their assumptions, and it is the opportunity to incorporate new reality criteria in their design experience” (Frascara, *Communication Design* 118).

User-Centered Design

In *The Design of Everyday Things*, Donald Norman discusses the idea of conceptual models. Conceptual models are the ways in which users' understand how a system or object works, or what a message communicates, so that users may predict outcomes and understand experiences (Norman 38). "The users' model is essential, of course, for that determines what is understood" (Norman 190). Understanding of a situation, as defined by users, is essential to building relationships between organizations and audiences because communication from the users' perspective becomes more accessible to users.

User-centered design emphasizes the user as an authority concerning their needs and involves consulting the user during the design process. According to *Designing for Interaction* by interaction designer and author Dan Saffer, "The people who will be using the product or service know what their needs, goals, and preferences are, and it is up to the designer to find out those things and design for them" (Saffer 33). Designers enable users to meet the users' goals. "Simply put, throughout the project, user data is the determining factor in making design decisions. When a question arises as to how something should be done, the users' wants and needs determine the response" (Saffer 34). User-centered design is iterative, in that as the project progresses, users are continually consulted.

Participatory Design

Participatory design has a strong relationship with user-centered design in that the users' needs and goals are entwined into the design process. In participatory design, designers and users work together in collaboration throughout the design process (Sanders 31). For example, participants may be asked to design portions of a project with the designer as facilitator.

Interaction Design

In *Designing for Interaction*, Saffer defines interaction design as "how products behave and provide feedback based on what people are engaged with them are doing." He further states that interaction design "is inherently social, revolving around facilitating communication between humans through products" (Saffer 5).

Interaction design is focused on enabling relationships between people through systems and objects. The focus is on the relationships between people, and how systems can better assist those relationships. As the Interaction Design Association (IXDA) states, "Interaction Designers strive to create meaningful relationships between people and the products and services that they use, from computers to mobile devices to appliances and beyond" ("IXDA Mission").

User-Experience Design

User-experience design can encompass the design approaches already discussed. User-experience design focuses on designing the experience before defining the product. There is a focus on telling stories, or enabling users to create stories. According to Marc Hassenzahl, Professor at Folkwang University, "This leads to

products which are sensitive to the particularities of human experience. It leads to products able to tell enjoyable stories through their use or consumption” (Hassenzahl). User-experience design is “the conscious design of resulting experiences, from technology-driven innovations to human-driven innovations” (Hassenzahl).

3.4 Design Research

The design approaches explored have a commonality; they are heavily research-based. Visual communication design seeks to study and evaluate the effectiveness of the communication of messages. User-centered design involves consultation with users on their goals and needs. Participatory design actively involves users in the design of projects. Interaction design works to understand and enhance relationships between users through systems or objects. User-experience design focuses on designing the experience of products. In each design approach, research is integral to understanding the complexity of situations and how design can identify areas of enhancement. These approaches cannot be accomplished without research. In particular, these approaches cannot be accomplished without research involving stakeholders such as organizations, audiences, participants, and end-users.

In *Visual Research* by Ian Noble and Russell Bestley, the authors state “Research is an intrinsic aspect for design practice and an essential part to the activity of problem solving. The designer is in a constant process of enquiry. It could be said that this process is predicated upon the notion of questioning...” (Noble and Bestley 18). Design research is a rich and multifaceted endeavour, used to inform how a project should proceed throughout its various stages based on the needs of an audience. In the essay “Sharpening One’s Axe,” Paul J. Nini states:

“We can use research techniques that allow us to solicit opinions, observe behavior, or even allow viewers to participate in developing ideas. In short, we can move toward a design process that incorporates input from those involved, and that results in designed communications that more effectively meet viewer needs and expectations” (Nini 117).

Design research is an iterative, reflective, and inclusive process. As an iterative process, design research is conducted incrementally throughout several stages of the project. Design research, as a reflective practice, means information gained through research informs all stages of a project, including looking back at improving previous stages, examining and revising current stages, and guiding future stages. The design researcher continually gains knowledge that affects future research areas and current design considerations, creating a cyclical process. By incorporating the user in the process, design research creates a more inclusive and democratic environment. In the essay “Transformation Design,” the authors state:

“Observation helps uncover some of [the users’] more latent needs and desires. Immersing themselves in context helps designers to gain empathy and allows them to observe, analyse and synthesize simultaneously. These research methods do not aim to yield any quantitative or objective research

‘truth’, but rather to provide inspiration and actionable insights” (Burns, et al. 18).

The research I have undertaken in the area of visitor engagements utilizes design research to ensure a reflective and inclusive practice of design.

3.5 Research Methodologies

Several methods, both quantitative and qualitative, are used to conduct design research. The research undertaken for this study includes a literature review, observations, case studies, surveys, workshops, and artifacts produced and tested. The analysis of the collected data includes reviewing the results, summarizing the information, classifying information into categories, coding data, and documenting into themes.

Participants

This research includes information collected from museum visitors, museum professionals, students from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, and the general public.

Surveys

This research includes three online surveys, each 13 questions long:

- survey of museum visitors (71 responses),
- survey of museum professionals (45 responses), and
- survey of Department of Art and Design students participating in field trips to London and Brussels, and New York City (12 responses).

The surveys included both closed and open-ended questions and results were collected anonymously. These surveys were open to anyone who wished to participate and fit the criteria of the survey.

Interviews

This research involved conducting four face-to-face semi-structured interviews conducted with Edmonton museum professionals. The interviews were approximately 20 minutes long and participants had the option to be anonymous in the final document.

Workshops

This research involved conducting four workshops with students in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Canada:

- Tagging Workshop, completed with 14 undergraduate Visual Communication Design students,
- Audio Tours and Catalogues Workshop, completed with eight graduate students representing Fine Art and Design Studies,

- Public Art and Design Visitor Guides and Plaques Workshop, completed with 12 undergraduate Visual Communication Design students, and
- Public Art and Design Documentation, completed with 12 undergraduate Visual Communication Design students.

In these workshops, students were asked to complete an exercise and discuss the results of their findings.

Artifacts

There were two artifacts created after the initial research was completed:

- a mobile website for smartphones to document public art and design, and
- an installation piece for an exhibition.

The mobile website was a prototype that was accessible from mobile phones for use in crowdsourcing information about public art and design in Edmonton. This project was called *Edmonton Art + Design*. Data about the mobile website was collected via surveys administered to students at the University of Alberta, Canada.

The installation allowed visitors to the Latitude 53 Gallery, in Edmonton, Canada, the ability to contribute alternative titles to nine artworks displayed in the exhibition. This project was called *Entitle* and visitors to the gallery participated as part of a live, interactive design experiment. I documented my observations and casual conversations with visitors to the gallery who participated. Once the project was complete, artists were asked for their feedback on the contributed titles.

4.0 Research

The research entailed conducting and analyzing surveys, interviews, workshops, and building artifacts. The research materials are available in the Appendix.

	Surveys	Interviews	Workshops	Artifacts
Museum Professionals	●	●		
Visitors	●			●
Students			●	●

Table 4.01 Research conducted by type of participant

Museum professionals were surveyed and interviewed, allowing for breadth of information from survey data and depth from interview responses. Visitors were surveyed with a similar framework but different questions as compared to the museum professionals. Students in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta participated in workshops. As visitors to museums, students participating in the workshops offered rich responses to questions, as compared to the visitors survey which offered a breadth of responses. The artifacts delivered practical applications of my research. As part of the workshops, students helped define some aspects of the artifact designs. Visitors were able to experience the artifacts in a gallery setting.

4.1 Early Experiments

Early in my studies, I completed design projects for three exhibitions as preliminary research. For *Germinations*, in 2009, I designed an interactive map of Edmonton to show the growth of the city boundaries over time. The boundaries were printed on several pieces of clear velum and the user could layer the boundaries on top each other to compare. For *Noise Play*, in 2009, I compared the amount of inactive space junk to the amount of active telecommunications satellites above Edmonton using a mobile, in a piece called *Swarm*. In 2010, I created an interactive information design piece for *Out of the Bag* to show how quality of life has changed over twenty years in Edmonton. Each progress indicator was represented by a different 3D graphs cut out of foam. The user could pick up and move the indicators to compare or contrast the information.

These early experiments enabled me to direct my research focus into the area of interaction in the museum setting. I observed users responding to my projects, which reinforced my perception that the audience has an interest in interactive design experiences as part of their museum engagement.

4.2 Survey of Museum Professionals

This research involved conducting an online survey of local, national and international museum professionals from large and small institutions. The purpose of the survey was to determine what visitor engagements the institution utilizes, why these are used, their effectiveness on visitors, and constraints. Areas covered include the type of museum, visitor engagement practices, and observations on visitor engagements used by the institution.

Participants

Participants consisted of local, national and international museum professionals; that is, individuals who work for a museum in a professional capacity, whether as employees or as volunteers.

Recruitment

Museum professionals were recruited through mailing lists and newsletters of various organizations, such as the Canadian Museums Association, provincial museums associations, and international associations. Some individuals were contacted directly through email. The body of the letter of introduction described the research, defined the nature and anonymity of the survey, stated explicitly that a response to the survey constitutes consent and provided my contact information.

Methods and Procedures

The survey was conducted from March to August 2011, using an online survey tool called Google Forms, and there were a total of 45 responses. The survey consisted of 13 questions, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The survey was anonymous. The data was collected into a spreadsheet. The results were reviewed, summarized, coded, classified into categories, and documented into themes.

Demographics

Of the responses, 51% (or 23/45 responses) were from a history museum, historic house or heritage museum. The rest of the responses came from art museums or galleries, science or technology museums, aquariums or zoos, small community-run arts centres or museums, and others including Legislature buildings. There were responses from local, national and international museums. There was a range of museum sizes. Museum budgets ranged from approximately \$1000 to \$2 000 000 per year and number of visitors to these institutions ranged from approximately 150 to 470 000 per year.

Museum Size

The primary method for defining museum size for this study was by recent annual budget size. The budget sizes ranged from \$1000 to \$2 000 000 per year. The following table compares annual budget size, from 36 responses given out of 45, including number of visitors, number of employees and collection size (number of artifacts). The values are displayed as a range, since not all responses that gave budget

information explicitly stated visitors, employees and/or collection size; that is to say, some responses were left blank.

Budget Size/Year (in thousands)	Visitors/Year	Full-time employees	Part-time employees	Collection Size
Less than \$50 (9 responses)	150 – 38 000	0 – 45		100 – 1000
\$50 to \$100 (6 responses)	500 – 20 000	0 – 45	1 – 2	200 – 35 000
\$150 to \$500 (10 responses)	2000 – 200 000	1 – 50	1 – 20	250 – 50 000
\$500 to \$2 000 (11 responses)	30 000 – 470 000	4 – 200	3 – 25	1000 – 24 000

Table 4.2.1 Museum budget size

Although the data is not definitive, the information indicates that, as expected, the larger the museum budget, the greater the number visitors, employees and collection size.

As a secondary way of defining the size of a museum, I have looked at number of visitors per year as stated by 38 of the 45 respondents. The following table compares number of visitors per year with budget size.

Visitors/Year	Budget Size/Year
Up to 1500	\$1000 – \$75 000
1500 to 10 000	\$10 000 – \$250 000
10 000 to 50 000	\$42 000 – \$1 300 000
50 000 to 500 000	\$360 000 - \$2 000 000

Table 4.2.2 Number of museum visitors

Theses results are illustrated in the following chart.

Professionals Survey: Museum budget by number of visitors annually, 34 responses

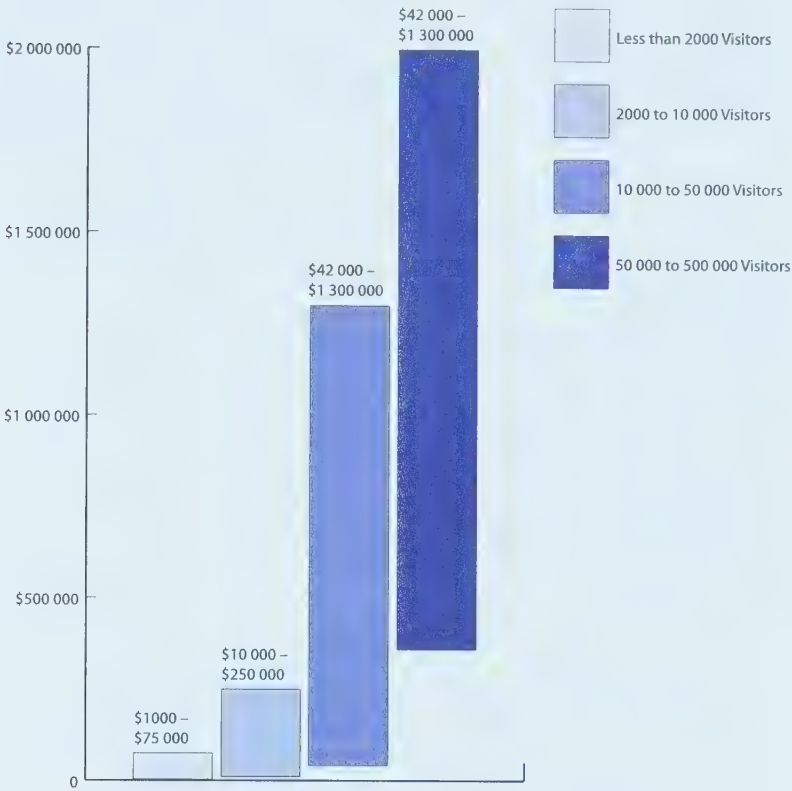


Fig 4.2.3: Professionals Survey: Museum budget by number of visitors annually

Museum Professionals

Participants in the survey came from a variety of employment positions, including Curator, Coordinator, Director, Education Officer/Specialist, Executive Director, Founder, Manager and Program Director. There were 44 responses out of 45.

When asked the title of the position in the organization that deals directly with creating visitor engagements, there were a variety of position titles listed, including Curator, Director, Education Coordinator, Interpretative Program Coordinator, Programs Coordinator, Manager and Marketing/Communications. A few responses indicated that the responsibility for visitor engagements fell to several individuals. “This is the responsibility of many of our staff— and we would benefit by having these various staff and departments working more closely together” (Participant). As shown above, the making of visitor engagements can fall into several different types of employment positions.

Findings

Visitor Engagements

Participants were asked, using a list provided, how often certain visitor engagements were provided: always, often, sometimes, rarely, and not offered. The number of responses ranged from 41 to 43 responses, and most organizations offered some form of visitor engagements.

Professionals Survey: Types of visitor engagements offered by museums, 41–43 responses

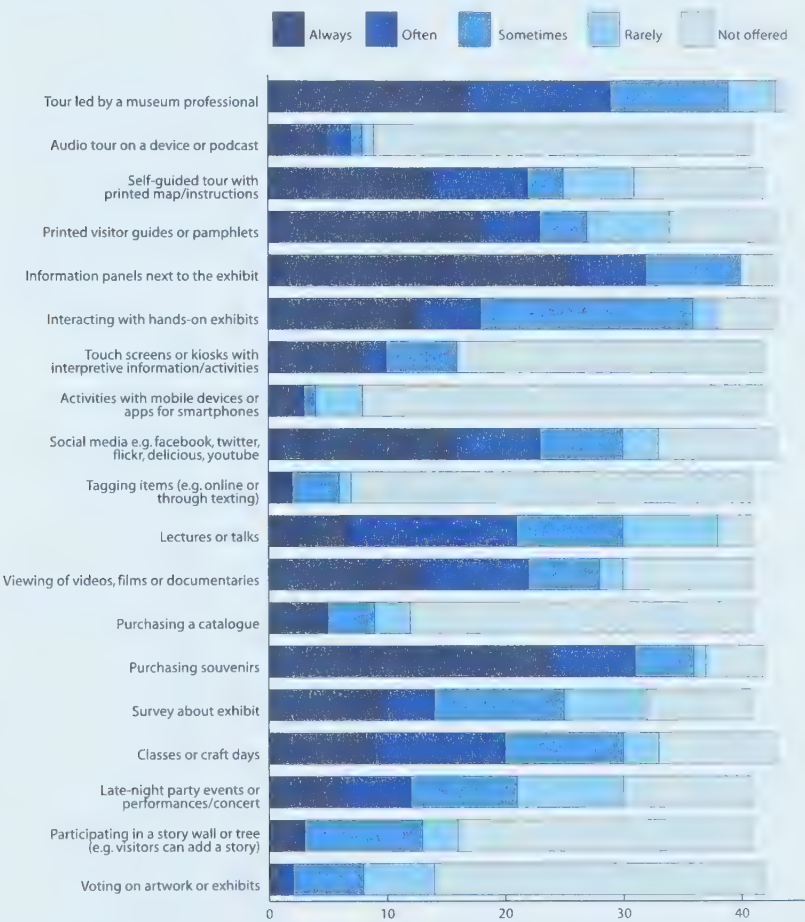


Fig 4.2.4: Professionals Survey: Types of visitor engagements offered by museums

Most museums offered tours led by staff, self-guided tours with maps, visitor guides, hands-on exhibits, and souvenirs. Several are engaged with social media, have lectures and films, classes and craft days, and feedback through surveys. Fewer organizations offered audio tours, activities for mobile devices, or catalogue purchases. When asked for examples of other visitor engagements, many museums

stated education programs and summer camps for children and youth were implemented.

When asked about the primary purpose of visitor engagements, participants could select multiple responses: enhance learning, encourage visitors to participate, create dialogue, additional source of contextual and interpretive information, allow visitors to have a social experience with others, and entertain visitors. Participants could select more than one answer. The majority of respondents believe enhancing learning and providing additional information were the primary purpose of visitor engagements.

Participants were asked about the benefits of visitor engagements. Visitor engagements bring context and focus to the visitor's experience. "The Museum is a labyrinthine experience so the tours and talks are useful for giving visitors an overview of why the Museum looks like it does, how to make sense of the arrangements, what to look out for of special interest" (Participant response). Visitor engagements that are layered, flexible and focus on different learning styles are key to meeting visitor's needs. "Visitor engagement that is layered—provides various ways to participate—best benefits visitors. [It] meets more of the different learning styles and also best matches with the various motivations that visitors have for coming to the museum" (Participant response). Visitor engagements that encourage dialogue and participation enable effective personalized experiences and learning. "Often there is a story associated with objects which cannot be adequately conveyed other than through conversation. Many come away feeling they have gained personal experience rather than the impersonal of simply viewing an object" (Participant response). One of the respondents emphasized ensuring that visitors know they are appreciated by the museum. "I believe visitors want to feel appreciated, that their visit to the museum was worthwhile. I believe interaction with them, i.e. asking their opinion, listening to a connection that they experienced at the museum, or answering their questions, makes them feel they valued." Another respondent shared an interesting visitor engagement whereby visitors are asked to co-produce exhibitions. "We try to include exhibition activities that allow visitors to add to the exhibit in an artistic way. We have also hosted exhibitions that were cooperatively developed with our staff/volunteers and members of the public." The overall focus is to enhance learning and make connections in a social and flexible way to meet visitors' needs.

Challenges and Constraints

Museum professionals face several challenges and constraints in creating and implementing visitor engagements. Six constraints, expressed by the 40 participants who responded, were lack of time, money, personnel, expertise, and physical space, as well as a lack of support or resistance to visitor engagement projects.

As expected, a lack of time, funding and personnel were the most common constraints. In comparing these constraints with museum size based on annual budget, all museum sizes felt the burden of the constraints equally. The lack of expertise indicates there is a need for creative individuals to define, design, and implement visitor engagements. As asked by one of the respondents, "Visitors may

have a wonderful tour with a professional guide when they come on an educational program but experience a disconnect when they come back on their own. How do we everyday provide a fabulous experience for a wide variety of learning styles and for visitors with many different motivations and expectations?"

Conclusion

The results of this survey show that there was a wide range of museums using visitor engagements, and the engagements themselves cover many types including tours, printed guides and digital media. Museums have an interest in making engagements that are flexible and layered for different visitor needs. These visitor engagements create personal connections between the visitor and the museum and encourage learning. Museums are delivering interactive and personalized engagements through tours led by museum professionals, classes, education programs and summer camps, and rely mostly on employees to make connections and create dialogue with the community and individuals. Independent visitors, who may not partake of face-to-face visitor engagements, have fewer options for engaging with the museum through visitor engagements. The results expose a need for individuals with expertise in creating visitor engagements in the midst of various challenges. These results lay the groundwork for understanding the needs of museums and have provided guidance for research in this study.

4.3 Interviews with Museum Professionals

This research involved conducting semi-structured interviews with four Canadian museum professionals from large and small institutions. The purpose of the interviews was to determine the role of the museum in the community, what visitor engagements the institution utilizes, why these are used, their effectiveness on visitors, and constraints.

Participants

Participants consisted of museum professionals from Canadian organizations, and from both small and large institutions. Two participants were from contemporary art galleries, one from a public arts organization and one from a large natural and human history museum.

Recruitment

Museum professionals were recruited through a face-to-face request to participate. The request described the research and the nature of the interview. Participants were informed that they had the choice to be anonymous or to be quoted in the final document.

Methods and Procedures

The interviews were conducted between May and August 2011. The interviews were face-to-face conversations and were audio recorded if the participant gave permission to do so. The questions were open-ended in nature. The results were

transcribed, reviewed, summarized, coded, classified into categories, and documented into themes.

Findings

The Role of the Museum in the Society

Although interview questions focused on the role of the museum in the community, participants gave a greater context of the role and value of the museum in society. As one participant responded, “Museums, on a social and environmental level, should be working towards a greater justice and equality.” The interviews indicated that museums work as advocates for the values of a society, and should promote an agenda that enhances the lives of its citizens. They cultivate differing points of view through their collections. These values are reflected in the city itself, where public art acts to reflect the values of the citizens and promote social equality. “Public art is important from a democratic point of view. If you’re going to be a democratic city in a modern civilization, you need to show a non-homogeneous, non-dictatorial collection of art to prove that you are open to new ideas and thoughts in a contemporary society” (Participant response).

The Role of the Museum in the Community

Museums serve multiple communities. For these interviews, two categories of communities were defined: the general public who attend the museum; and, creators of artifacts or content that are displayed in the museum. The individuals in these categories overlapped; that is, individuals who create artifacts, such as artists having a show in a gallery, may also be considered part of the general public who attend museums. As well, those who fall into the category of the general public, can be further subdivided in those who actually go to the physical space of the museum and those who experience the museum without coming to its location. “Audience was often previously defined as those people who come through the doors, and it’s not always that anymore. Your audience could be people who actually never come in through your doors” (Participant response).

The Role of the Museum in Regards to Visitors

Museums have many diverse roles in regards to visitors. The interviews suggested that the primary focus of museums is to benefit audiences, by creating dialogue and enhancing learning experiences. As one participant commented, “We’re here to serve a greater good. Not just to preserve heritage and culture and art but to showcase it and engage people with it, from all different levels, from brightening people’s lives to encouraging and enabling dialogue to promoting stronger intercultural understanding.” According to another participant, an art gallery should benefit the public by showing local artists, as well as showing art from different regions that locals should have the opportunity to see and experience. To that end, another participant stated that museums should also offer challenging programming that question beliefs. “Museums and galleries should be places that anger you or stimulate you or excite you or challenge you. So maybe the idea should be that if you’re offended by ideas, please enter with caution” (Participant response).

In the area of public art, a participant stated that the audience and community is a platform. The participant further commented that public art is created within the context of the communities in which it is displayed, “considering the public as a space for public art.” As stated by a participant from the point of view of public arts, the “community is considered an impetus or eventual audience.”

The interviews exposed that role of the institution includes defining a specific mandate for itself. They need to articulate their parameters and who their audience is so as to find the best ways to serve them. As one participant commented, without a mandate the institution cannot adequately meet visitor needs and evaluate performance. “If you’re too broad you don’t do anything well” (Participant response). That said, defining a mandate is problematic. One participant noted that institutions can have a mandate of mass appeal in an attempt to get people through the door, which can alienate local communities. The participant further acknowledges that where large numbers of people are needed to keep the doors open, this type of mandate looks for blockbuster shows as a form of entertainment that appeals to a mass audience.

The Role of the Museum in Regards to Creators of Artifacts

Museums work as venue to show the work of artists or the artifacts created by past and present cultures. In the case of artists, one participant stated that museums are a professional context in which to see the artist’s work. “The art gallery extends its cultural capital to the artist” (Participant response). In the case of public art, the space and funding provided by the organization acts as the platform for creating public art. “A lot of public artwork doesn’t exist without the context of the site” (Participant response). Museums enable communication between the creator and the public. One participant responded by stating that the arts community struggles with educating the community about arts. Museums can help enable artists to communicate their ideas. From the perspective of the natural and human history museum, working with the culture that originated the artifacts can enable deeper understandings. One participant stated that the repatriation of artifacts to the originating community enhances relations and promotes further dialogue.

The Role of the Museum in Edmonton

Edmonton is seeing changes in its cultural institutions. The newly renovated Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA) opened its doors in January 2010 and the Royal Alberta Museum will be moving to an expanded space downtown. As one participant stated, the AGA took on a bigger mandate, making itself responsible for all of Alberta, not just Edmonton as in its previous incarnation of the Edmonton Art Gallery. As another participant laments, the shift in mandate means the AGA is working primarily as a booking agent for large shows, and not offering opportunities to local artists. Another participant stated that the new AGA ignited conversations within the gallery community in regards to Edmonton’s cultural institution ecosystem, opening dialogue on how other galleries may respond to the new AGA. “It would be great if all the institutions talked about the ecosystem and figured out the gaps.”

The city itself is always changing in subtle and important ways. In the area of public art, one participant stated, “The city is always changing. You think that you know your neighbourhood but you don’t because it’s never static. And it’s not controlled by one person; it’s not even controlled by the city corporate entity.”

Edmonton is known for having creative people leave for bigger cities with seemingly more opportunities. As museums work to create more opportunities within Edmonton, this trend is possibly shifting to seeing more people remain residents. “There’s a real wave coming over this city, where artists say I’m going to choose to stay here. What’s great about Edmonton is almost anyone can have access to almost anyone else. And I think while the community is critical, they are supportive of their fellow artists.”

Visitor Engagements

Visitor engagements can enable visitors to make connections and create meaning for themselves in the museum context. They offer the opportunity to create dialogue and encourage participation. One participant stated that visitor engagements are platforms to engage with the public and allow people to shift perspectives through the tool of didactic information. The participant further comments that museums are responding to the need to entertain, guide, and create an experience. As another participant stated, “When that doesn’t exist the audience is being neglected.” From a gallery point of view, one participant commented that “audience engagement tours are often for the uninitiated” and people are most terrified about art or having to give their opinion because they lack visual literacy. In designing visitor engagements, one participant stated that audiences like subtle prompts. Adults are difficult to engage, as compared to children who are “smart and inquisitive.”

Creating visitor engagements for public art can be challenging due to the ever-changing nature of the city. The physical space in which the art is placed alters over time, as does the community of people that surrounds it. “If you take the city, and we know the city is changing all the time, so you have a non-static site with an undefined location and an undefined public and then you try and curate art for it, how do you do that? And how do you measure the success for that? How do you really provide interpretive programming and support for it? It’s not easy and it’s not something you want to define. I think the undefined part of it is really interesting.”

Dialogue within visitor engagements that use social media can be complex and difficult to evaluate. As one participant stated, “With social media, the ability to process information without a guide or indicated method for them has museums changing.” Visitors may not respond directly to social media in that they may not write back a response or comment on an article. As one participant states, “A lot of times with online presence, we have this feeling that for a dialogue to occur there has to be two-way communication but often what I think happens with websites and blogs is that, with exception of Twitter, people will re-blog. Often with blogs people are responding but they are not responding online.” As a further comment, “They are reading it, they are absorbing it and they are talking to other people about it.”

Visitor engagements take many forms. Tours, public lectures, online databases of art collections and school programs were some of examples given by participants. One participant felt that a space for the public to gather and discuss was a great way to engage the audience. “Almost all of the galleries have a public gathering space. It’s not just all exhibits; there’s space for interaction.” Another participant noted that publications document exhibitions and help shows to get noticed, meaning there is an emphasis on publications in the artist community.

Challenges and Constraints

The participants discussed several constraints in regards to their organizations. Most noted that funding for public programming is an issue. One participant stated that funding may come with restrictions as to where the money can be used which limits the scope of projects. As another participant stated, organizations need to be creative with money, need to have a roadmap, and patience. “It’s about being creative, and I think that’s not a bad thing because if a granting agency is going to give you a lump sum of money then you get to choose what to do with it and you set those priorities.”

Among cultural institutions, there is a need to create and maintain relationships to ensure the arts ecosystem of the city are meeting audience and artist needs. “We want to be a city where artists choose to stay.” A strong bond among cultural institutions can foster a stronger artist community. As one participant states, “[Artists] are a really strong litmus test of a community, and creativity and thoughtfulness. And if you have artists that are choosing to stay here, yet producing work beyond Alberta, then it raises the bar for all of the other artists that are here. And it’s important to have people that are able to challenge that and say no, that’s not good enough. We need to strive higher.” The participant would like to see commercial galleries that push ideas and an expansion for the University of Alberta gallery space to have both a student gallery and a research gallery.

Isolation is another constraint expressed, in that Edmonton, the city itself, is isolated from other cities, and not just because of geography. “The constraints though is often the city itself. I think Edmonton is in many ways tremendously isolated and I don’t know why. I think it’s not just our geographical location but that there isn’t a strong connection to Calgary, and there isn’t a strong connection to Regina or Saskatoon, or any other prairie city that’s not that far away. It’s almost like Edmonton has this dome.”

Participants noted a lack of writing about art in the city and that the community is not nurturing a young writing community. One participant referred to the *Alberta Art Chronicle* as a good example of writing based out of Calgary, while another participant pointed to *Border Crossings* as an excellent publication coming out of Winnipeg. These publications generate interest about their cities on a national and international stage, and Edmonton lacks in having one such publication to promote its cultural scene. Related to writing, mentoring and a support system within the artist community are also lacking. According to one participant, Edmonton is a city of emerging artists, with some mid-level artists and one or two senior-level artists who have shows on a national or international scale. The participant expressed

curiosity as to why there is no mentoring and how the support system of artists in Edmonton could be improved.

Conclusion

The results of these interviews express a range of opinions on the role of the museum in the community, visitor engagements, and the challenges for museums. Museums have a duty to serve the greater good in society. Museums serve the community by engaging the community and defining a mandate to serve the community. Within Edmonton, the role of museums is changing with new cultural institution projects shifting the ecosystem. Visitor engagements encourage dialogue and deliver contextual information to the public. Constraints and challenges affect both the museum and the community it serves.

4.4 Survey of Museum Visitors

This research involved conducting an online survey of visitors to museums. The purpose of the survey was to determine what visitor engagements were used, examine how visitors connect with exhibits, what effects visitor engagements have on visitor, and how visitors describe themselves based on museum visitor types provided.

Participants

Participants consisted of visitors to museums.

Recruitment

Museum visitors were recruited through social media, direct email, and newsletters. The body of the letter of introduction described the research, defined the nature and anonymity of the survey, stated explicitly that a response to the survey constitutes consent and provided my contact information.

Methods and Procedures

The survey was conducted from March to August 2011, using an online survey tool called Google Forms, and there were a total of 71 responses. The survey consists of 13 questions, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The survey is anonymous. The data was collected into a spreadsheet. The results were reviewed, summarized, coded, classified into categories, and documented into themes.

Demographics

Of the responses, 68% were female and 31% were male, based on 70 responses. (Of note, since responding to every question was not required, the number of responses collected varies.) The largest number of responses came from age range of 31-40 years old (31/71 responses), with the age range of 25-30 years old at 24% and 41-50 years old at 17%. The following chart compares age range with gender based on 70 responses.

Visitor Profiles

For the purpose of this survey, participants were asked to select their visitor profile, and the options provided are based on the visitor clusters described in *Ignite the Power of Art* (Pitman and Hirzy 42). Each visitor profile was described as follows:

- Observer – prefers a guided experience and straightforward explanations
- Participant – has interest in connecting with the exhibits and the social experience of being at the museum or gallery
- Independent – prefers to view exhibits independently
- Enthusiast – actively participates in a wide variety of museum programming
- Other – option to enter text

Participants could select one or more of the options provided. The majority of participants selected Independent as an option with a total of 47%. Of the six responses included in the “other” category, three participants self-identified as Independent and chose to offer an explanation, instead of selecting the “Independent” option provided.

Visitors Survey: Visitor profiles (participants could select more than one option)

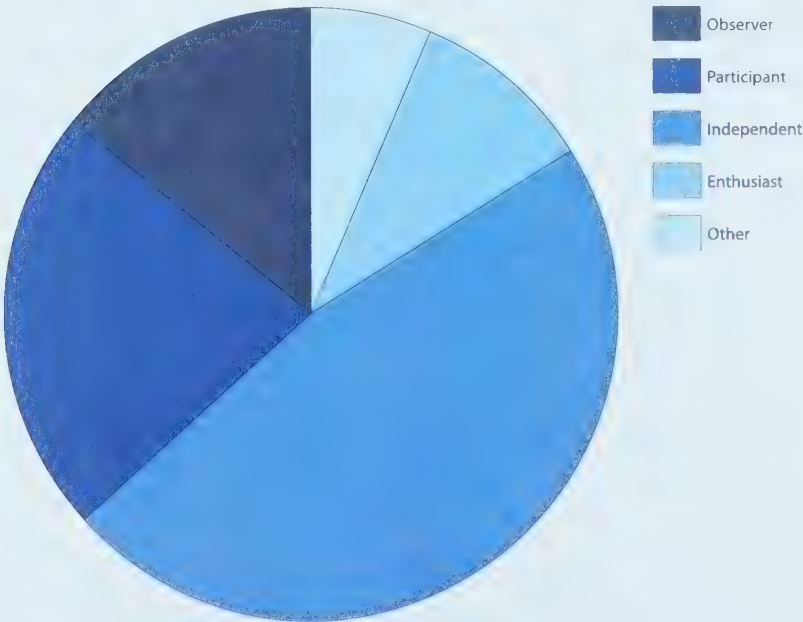


Fig 4.4.1: Visitors Survey: Visitor profiles (participants could select more than one option)

Since participants could choose more than one visitor profile, the following chart shows a breakdown of the combination of profiles. The responses from the “other” category are incorporated into this chart.

Visitors Survey: Visitor profiles, all categories selected by participants

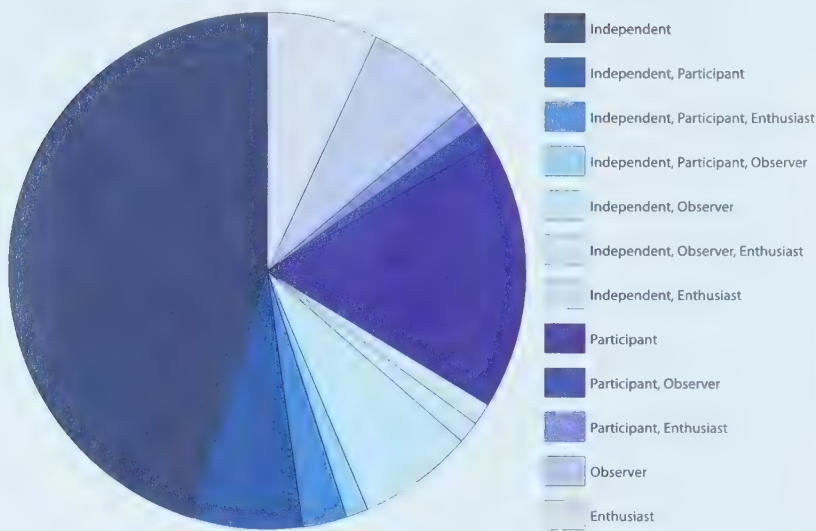


Fig 4.4.2: Visitors Survey: Visitor profiles, all categories selected by participants

Findings

Museum Attendance and Motivations

Participants were asked how often they visit museums in a year. There were 70 responses. 38% of participants said they visited between 2-5 times a year (27/70 responses), 27% said they visited between 6- 10 times per year, and 25% said they visited more than 10 times per year.

Participants were asked what types of museums they visit and their level of enjoyment in visiting. Of 71 responses, participants indicated they enjoy visiting art museums or galleries at 87% (60/71 responses), science or natural history museums at 85%, and history or heritage museums at 76%.

Participants were asked what interested them at their last visit to a museum, from a list of choices: content of the museum, specific exhibition, specific object and a program or event. They were most interested in the content of the museum at 93% and a specific exhibition at 93% from 71 responses. They were least interested in a program or event.

Participants were asked about their expectations in visiting a museum. They were offered the choice of learning something, having an interesting experience, being entertained, having a social experience with others, and, participating in an activity. Of 71 responses, all participants indicated that having an interesting experience was important. 65% of participants indicated that learning something was important, while 46% thought it was not important to participate in an activity and 38% indicated it was not important to have a social experience with others.

Visitor Engagements

Participants were asked, using a list provided, how often they used certain visitor engagements: often, sometimes, never tried, and not offered/don't know if it was offered. The number of responses ranged from 70 to 71 responses.

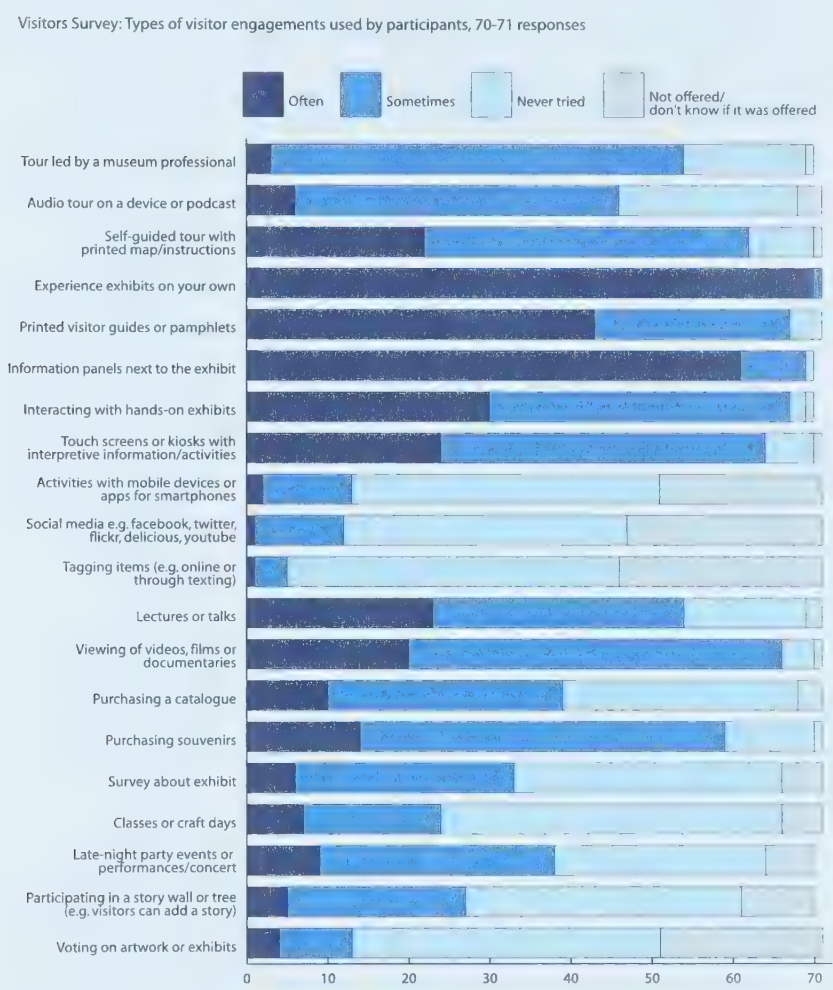


Fig 4.4.3: Visitors Survey: Types of visitor engagements used by participants

Since most participants chose the Independent category under visitor profiles, or some combination of independent and another category, it is necessary to investigate the visitor engagements used by this specific group. Their results are similar to that of all participants; however, independent visitors indicated less often use of tours led by museum professionals, and a dramatic increase viewing videos or films.

Visitors Survey: Types of visitor engagements used by participants for the independent visitor profile

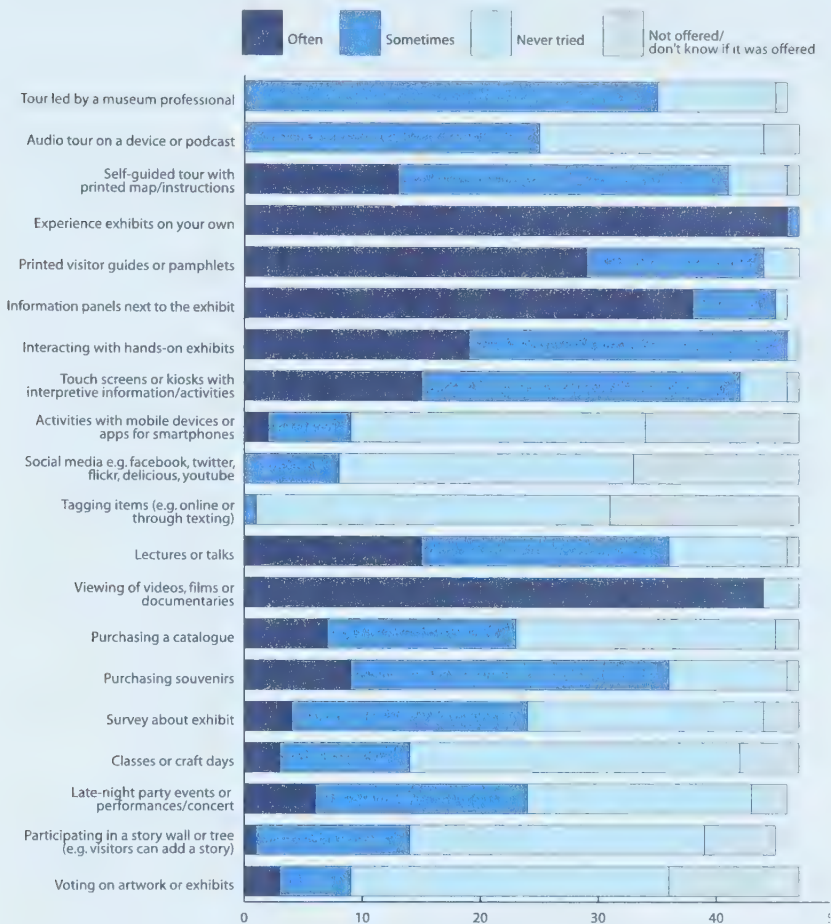


Fig 4.4.4: Visitors Survey: Types of visitor engagements used by participants for the Independent profile

Participants were asked, through a series of four open-ended questions, to describe visitor engagements they have used, what was the motivation to use them, and whether the visitor engagements were personalized or interactive. Several of the visitor engagements described were based on face-to-face encounters led by museum professionals such as tours, demonstrations, and activities based on exhibits. “Mostly I like to just go and look at things, and read info cards if I want more background. A really good speaker/tour guide can be a rarity; however, they make the most memorable experience” (Participant response). Participants enjoyed the opportunity to engage in dialogue and conversations, and hearing stories or anecdotes about exhibits to which they would not normally have access.

Participants were often motivated to use visitor engagements if they had an interest in the material presented in the exhibit, or the visitor engagement itself. “If I find a museum interesting enough to visit I will want to engage with the exhibits in as rich

a way as possible, as long as the experiences offered are desirable and don't force me into distractions from the work (like group discussions)" (Participant response). When using visitor engagements, participants sought to enhance their experience, learn more about exhibits, and engage with the information in a deeper and richer way. "I went on a walking tour in Berlin and had a very knowledgeable and entertaining tour guide show us a variety of memorials, sites, and points of interests. She gave us an introduction to many of the sites and encouraged us to further explore what she touched on. With that knowledge I felt like I was given a new perspective on the places I was visiting and better cultural understanding" (Participant response). Participants looked for a greater understanding of the context of the work, differing perspectives, and the ability to focus on certain areas. "I'm motivated to do things that help me learn, that let me get a differing perspective, that are fun, that don't feel like there are a lot of expectations associated with them" (Participant response).

Several participants enjoyed learning through hands-on, interactive, and personalized engagements. "Experience Music Project, Seattle offered the ability to interact on many levels simultaneously and to identify items during your visit for online access later" (Participant response). Engagements that focused on different learning styles or interests were welcomed. "I think that developing parallel engagements directed at children and at parents would engage more families—it seems like one of us is always bored out of our mind!" (Participant response). Participants emphasized that high-quality, well-informed information is necessary. One participant desired "good quality, concise and easy to read info panels that contain interesting tidbits about a piece," while another described a preference for "guided tours or lectures with a curator or a well informed docent, especially on a specific facet of the exhibition or specific theme."

Challenges and Constraints

Participants commented on various challenges and constraints in using visitor engagements. On a basic level, many visitor engagements are not accessible. The cost to using them may be prohibitive to some, the visitor may not have enough time to complete the engagement, or the visit to the museum may not time well with scheduled engagements. "Sometimes it is difficult to participate in interactive presentations because we don't know when they are offered before we get there (and websites don't always include this info). It is difficult to time our tour around specific presentations. However, we always make the effort to participate in as many of the engagements as we can, as there is always something interesting and fun that comes out for us." A few participants stated that crowds deter them from using visitor engagements. "A lot of touch screens have been added to the larger museums, but with crowded exhibits it's not as accessible as reading a plaque." Other participants noted that visitor engagements may be broken or not maintained. "A lot of the sites we visit use technology (like touch screens and buttons you can push to hear a blurb), but the technology often does not work and this is very frustrating." Another issue of access may come from the cultural institution itself. The art galleries often do not have visitor engagements. "It has been my experience that zoos and other animal centres do a better job of offering visitor engagement than cultural sites, which is even better than art galleries. Art galleries still bear the same stigma

as libraries (silent places where you can't talk for fear of bothering the books!) and I believe this is something that needs to be overcome.” As one participant stated, “Science museums thrive on this stuff. Art museums less so. Some modern art works demand visitor engagement, and these can be the most affecting of all.”

Conclusion

The survey delivered a variety of responses from a demographically diverse range of people. Overall, museum visitors desire to learn more, gain richer experiences, and gain differing perspectives. They enjoy interactive visitor engagements, and see the value in customizability. They also face constraints in using visitor engagements if the engagements are not accessible, and due to timing issues. Of the visitor profiles provided, more people identified with the Independent visitor option, indicating an opportunity for enriching relationships between Independent visitors and museums. This result guided further research in this document.

4.5 Survey of Design Students on International Field Trips

This research involved conducting an online survey of students in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta who visited museums when on international field trips. The purpose of the survey was to determine what visitor engagements were used, examine how students connected with exhibits, what effects visitor engagements had on students, and how students describe themselves based on museum visitor types provided.

Participants

Participants consisted of 12 students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. There were two field trips, one to London and Brussels, and one to New York City.

Recruitment

Permission was acquired from each field trip leader to contact the students on the field trips. Students were recruited through direct email, with email addresses provided by the field trip leader. The body of the letter of introduction described the research, defined the nature and anonymity of the survey, stated explicitly that a response to the survey constitutes consent, and provided my contact information.

Methods and Procedures

The survey was conducted in March 2011, using the online survey tool Google Forms, and there were a total of 12 responses. The survey consists of 14 questions, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The survey was anonymous. The data was collected into a spreadsheet. The results were reviewed, summarized, coded, classified into categories, and documented into themes.

Demographics

Of the 12 responses, 83% were female (10/12 responses) and 17% (2/12 responses) were male. The largest number of responses came from age range of 18-24 years old (11/12 responses), and one response from the age range of 31-40 years old.

Visitor Profiles

For the purpose of this survey, participants were asked to select their visitor profile, and the options provided are based on the visitor clusters described in *Ignite the Power of Art* (Pitman and Hirzy 42). Each visitor profile was described as follows:

- Observer – prefers a guided experience and straightforward explanations
- Participant – has interest in connecting with the exhibits and the social experience of being at the museum or gallery
- Independent – prefers to view exhibits independently
- Enthusiast – actively participates in a wide variety of museum programming
- Other – option to enter text

Participants could select one or more of the options provided. The majority of participants selected Independent as an option with a total of 58%. 32% of participants selected the Participant option, 16% selected the Observer option, and no participants selected the Enthusiast option.

Field Trip Survey: Visitor profiles (participants could select more than one option)

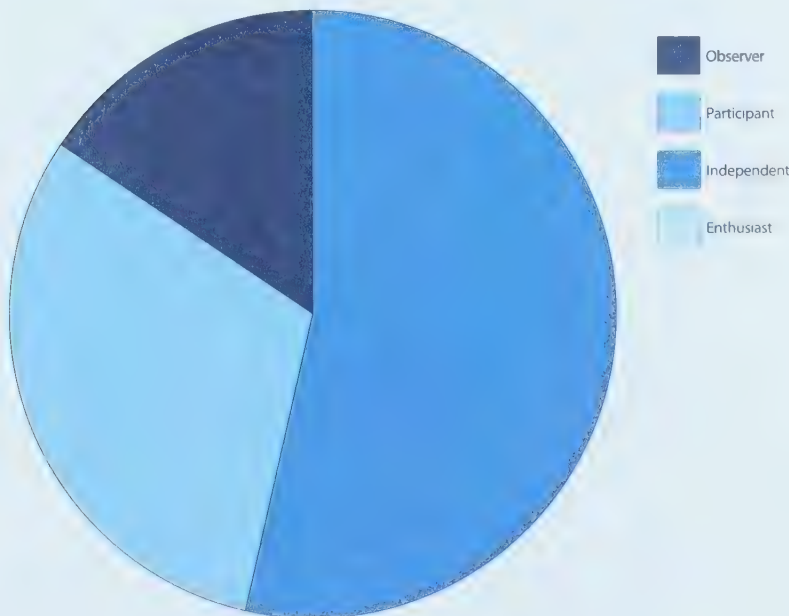


Fig 4.5.1: Field Trip Survey: Visitor profiles (participants could select more than one option)

Findings

Museum Attendance and Motivations

Participants were asked how often they visit museums in a year. There were 12 responses. 50% of participants said they visited between 2-5 times a year (6/12 responses), 42% said they visited between 6-10 times per year (5/12 responses), and 8% said they visited more than 10 times per year (1/12 responses).

Participants were asked what types of museums they visit and their level of enjoyment in visiting. Of 12 responses, participants indicated they enjoy visiting art museums or galleries at 92% (11/12 responses), science or natural history museums at 83% (10/12 responses), and history or heritage museums at 75% (9/12 responses).

Participants were asked to list three museums they visited during their international field trip. There were 11 responses: three from the New York City trip, seven from the London and Brussels trip, and one response that was not specific enough to tell where the participant had gone. From the New York trip, three students went to Museum of Modern Art, three students went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and two students went to the Guggenheim. From the London/Brussels trip, six students went to the Design Museums, five students went to the TATE, and four students went to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Participants were asked what interested them in visiting one of the museums, from a list of choices: content of the museum, specific exhibition, specific object, and a program or event. They were most interested in the content of the museum at 100% and a specific exhibition at 50%, from 12 responses. They were least interested in a program or event.

Participants were asked about their expectations in visiting the museums. They were offered the choices of learning something, having an interesting experience, being entertained, having a social experience with others, and participating in an activity. Of 12 responses, 92% of participants indicated that having an interesting experience was important. 67% of participants indicated that learning something was important, while 50% thought it was not important to participate in an activity.

Visitor Engagements

Participants were asked, using a list provided, how often they used certain visitor engagements: often, sometimes, never tried, and not offered/don't know if it was offered. There were 12 responses. Students tended to experience exhibits on their own most often.

Field Trip Survey: Types of visitor engagements used by participants, 12 responses

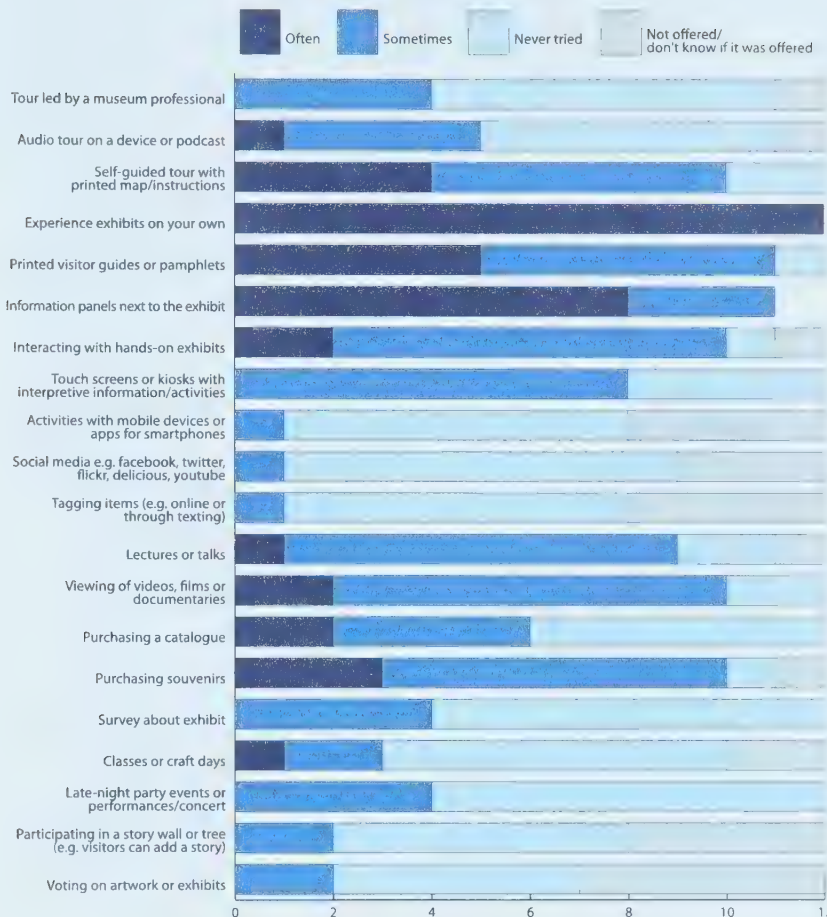


Fig 4.5.2: Visitors Survey: Types of visitor engagements used by participants

Participants were asked, through a series of four open-ended questions, to describe visitor engagements they have used, what was the motivation to use them, and whether the visitor engagements were personalized or interactive. A few participants mentioned audio tours, guided tours, and artist talks as visitor engagements they used; however, several participants indicated they prefer to experience a museum independently. One participant stated, “Generally, I like to walk through a museum/gallery at my own pace and read about specific pieces that I’m interested in.” Another response stated, “I like to be independent when I am visiting a gallery. I’d rather explore myself than be guided throughout the gallery. Often in tours, they skip over pieces I’d like to look at and by the time it’s over I don’t have enough time to view what we skipped. It’s easier to just find out what I want to know by myself. Although guided tours offer interesting details that I wouldn’t learn otherwise, I just don’t have the patience or time.” A few participants indicated a preference for information on what interested them, or where they could learn more and gain

insight on an artwork. “I like audio/ guided tours because I can learn more and get a better sense of how different artifacts in the collection relate to each other.”

Some of participants described interactive or hands-on encounters. “There was a video documentation opportunity in Tate open to the public to describe one’s experience or talk about a specific piece” and “there was one where you could digitally throw paint at a wall, like a DIY Jackson Pollock.”

Challenges and Constraints

One participant stated that he/she had limited time to engage at the museum. “I wasn’t really interested in participating due to time restriction and personal taste in museum experience.”

Conclusion

Of the visitor profiles provided, more participants selected the Independent visitor profile as an option. Overall, participants looked for insightful experiences and the ability to learn more about exhibits.

4.6 Workshop: Tagging

This research involved conducting a workshop with undergraduate design students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. There were 14 participants and the workshop was conducted in February 2011. The topic of the workshop was in the area of texting and tagging, and GPS or RFID tagging. The purpose of the workshop was to ascertain what students want to achieve through tagging and ideas as to how to use tagging in a museum context. This is a user-centered design approach where students are invited to invent visitor engagements they would enjoy. They were encouraged to think of future technologies that may not be viable yet.



Fig 4.6.1: Mind mapping

Participants

This workshop had 14 undergraduate design students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta.

Recruitment

Students were recruited during a design class with permission from their instructor. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and had no bearing on their academic performance.

Methods and Procedures

Students were given a brief presentation on visitor engagements. They were broken out into groups, given a scenario of a visitor engagement, and asked to complete a mind-mapping exercise on paper. After completing the exercise, there was a class discussion of the results. I collected the responses, with the students' permission. The students signed consent forms.

Half of the participants were given the following information:

“A tag is a keyword or term assigned to an item or a piece of information. In the case of a museum or gallery, visitors could assign tags they create to an artwork or exhibit item. Let's say a group of people came to a museum or gallery to tag the artwork through audio recordings. How would you, as members of the general public, want to use the audio recordings?”

The rest of the participants were given the following information:

“An electronic device can be installed on an object, such as a piece of artwork or an exhibit item, to enable one to track its location and collect various data through GPS technology. Let’s say museums and galleries are using GPS tracking technology. How could you, as members of the general public, use the GPS tracking technology?”

Case Studies

Case studies were used to develop the basic topics of the workshop.

Talking and Tagging at the MOMA

On May 28, 2005, a professor and his students brought digital recorders to the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York City and “created a set of guerrilla podcasts.” They recorded “alternative audio perspectives on some of the major works” and made them available for download (Samis 6). The result was that “someone had publicly usurped the museum voice from an esteemed, authoritative institution and substituted a set of opinionated, perceptive, and irreverent alternatives” (Samis 6).

RFID Tagging at Exploratorium

At the Exploratorium in San Francisco, the eXspot project allowed “users to ‘tag’ exhibits that piqued their interest during their visits and to learn more about them online” afterwards (Hsi 137). Visitors were given an eXspot ID card that could be placed on eXspots to tag that exhibit. At home, the visitor could log on to a website to “to view pictures of themselves or their families at those exhibits” (Hsi 137).

GPS Tour at the Biosphère

On a visit to Montreal, I went to the Biosphère and discovered they offered GPS tours of the island consisting of a tour of former Expo 67 sites. “Using special GPS devices, visitors can take a self-guided tour of 25 sites on the islands. At each site, the devices automatically display or play visual and audio content that explains the significance of the specific location. As they navigate, visitors can use their devices to determine their exact location along the route” (Environment Canada).

Findings

In reviewing the mind-mapping exercise, responses fell in to two categories: those responses that stated what the students wanted to accomplish and those that stated what visitor engagements they would use or invent.

Motivations and Methods: Talking and Tagging

For the talking and tagging exercise, students were asked to envision a scenario where visitors to a museum could tag, or add keywords, to an artifact through audio recordings. They were asked how they would use the audio-recorded tags. Students responded that they would use the tags to categorize or organize artifacts by searching for the “most popular” tags, find artifacts based on keyword searches that express their preferences of what to look at, such as a search for “quirky and cats,”

and acquire recommendations on what to see based on their preferred search terms. Through these searches, they stated they could prioritize their visit, have an individualized experience, and hear opinions about the artifacts. They would build their own tours based on their preferences. In the area of accessibility, one group stated that there could be a “mobility-impaired audio tour.” The students indicated they would like to find artifacts based on proximity to their location. The students noted that the tags could be used as a form of wayfinding in the museum. They believed that tagging could act as a form of democratizing the museum experience; they could listen to opinions about artifacts that are “not just ‘expert’ opinions.”

The responses indicated what visitor engagements the students would use or invent to accomplish their objectives. Students showed a preference for interactive visitor engagements. One group would like to use holograms, whereby the visitor would have viewing glasses to see tags surrounding the artifacts. They described an interaction wall that shows the tags, and visitors could touch the tags they prefer and transfer them to a mobile device that helps visitors find their way around based on their selected tags. Museum professionals or actors could be used as tags, where they wear shirts with a tag keyword and discuss artifacts based on the tag. They would use a virtual tour based on tags, or be able to access an online database. They would be interested in an “ambient conversation” exhibit. One group described having stickers that could be posted next to an artifact to tag it.

Motivations and Methods: GPS or RFID Tagging

For the GPS or RFID tagging exercise, students were asked to envision a scenario where visitors to a museum could use GPS or RFID tagging technology. In this scenario, artifacts have devices installed that can find the artifacts’ location through the Global Positioning System (GPS) or through radio-frequency identification (RFID). They were asked how they would use the GPS or RFID tags. Students responded that they would use the tags as a form of navigation, to create a map of the artifacts. They could find artifacts on a local or global scale. For example, they could track travelling shows, know the location of dinosaur bones, or be able to track objects in space as part of a “space art” exhibition. They would create their own tours, which offer the opportunity for individualization of the museum experience.

The responses indicated what visitor engagements the students would use or invent to accomplish their objectives. They showed a preference for interactive visitor engagements. The groups listed game-like visitor engagements such as scavenger hunts, hide and seek, treasure hunts through geocaching, and puzzles. One group would like to use moving sidewalks to deliver the visitor to the artifact. Google Maps with real-time street views was another suggestion. The students were interested in seeing art outside the gallery. I can infer this means finding public art, or going to locations that inspired the art located in the gallery or from which the art originated. They would use iPhone or Blackberry apps related to GPS tracking. One suggested a holographic projection, where the user could go to a space and see the artifacts in relationship to each other as “artificial simulations of the gallery.”

Challenges and Constraints

In the area of GPS or RFID tagging, students noted that there may be privacy issues, as I infer, if the user's location is tracked, or if the museum does not want artifact locations to be known.

Conclusion

This workshop offered the opportunity for design students to express their opinions about visitor engagements related to tagging. By exploring a user-centered design approach whereby the students could invent their own visitor engagements, participants expressed a desire for interactive and personalized experiences.

4.7 Workshop: Audio Tours and Catalogues

This research involved conducting a workshop with graduate students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. There were eight participants, six of whom consented to have their responses included in this document, and the workshop was conducted in August 2011. The topic of the workshop was in the area of audio tours and catalogues. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different types of audio tours and catalogues. Students were encouraged to answer from the perspective of being museum visitors and professional creators of artifacts that may be displayed in a museum.

Participants

This workshop had eight graduate students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta, six of whom consented to have their responses included in this document. Five of the graduate students were fine artists and one graduate student was a visual communications designer. These students are museum visitors and they are professionals who may have their work displayed in museums.

Recruitment

Graduate students in the Department of Art and Design have organized monthly graduate student talks, where one or two students discuss their work. This workshop was part of a graduate student talk. Students were recruited via email through the Department Council Representative. Students were informed that participation was voluntary.

Methods and Procedures

Students were given a brief presentation on visitor engagements. They were broken out into groups, given scenarios of visitor engagements, and asked to complete an exercise on paper where they state the advantages and disadvantages of the scenarios. After completing the exercise, there was a discussion of the results. I collected the responses, with the students' permission. The students signed consent forms.

Half of the participants were asked to state the advantages and disadvantages of certain audio tour scenarios, from both museum visitor and professional artifact creator points of view:

- Traditional audio tour with spoken audio commentary on certain artifacts chosen by museum professionals
- Build-your-own audio tour where visitors can select which audio commentaries they listen to by searching for keywords that tag each commentary, and organize their tour into themes based on their interests
- Soundscape or musical playlist audio tour where either the visitor creates their own playlist of music to listen to as they walk the museum or the museum provides a musical soundscape

The rest of the participants were asked to state the advantages and disadvantages of certain catalogue scenarios, from both museum visitor and professional artifact creator points of view:

- Traditional printed catalogue created by the museum and bought at the gift shop
- Print-on-demand catalogues where the museum produces a few different versions of the same catalogue in smaller quantities, and visitors can select which content interests them; for example, an exhibition in Montreal could have one version of the catalogue where the introductory essays are in English and another version where the essays are in French or a travelling art show could offer localized content by providing additional essays specific to the location from local writers
- eBook catalogues that can be downloaded to an eBook reader, such as iPad or Kindle provided by the museum or owned by the visitor, and used as an interactive guide to the exhibition

Case Studies

Case studies were used to develop the basic topics of the workshop.

Audio Tours at SFMOMA

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) created online SFMOMA Artcasts, “designed to project a variety of art concepts and voices out into the community, and to invite the community back into the museum” (Samis 7). The audio commentaries include the artists, curators, poets or musicians responses to the works on display, and non-experts from the general public who reflect on the works. “The mix of voices and genres creates a lively dialogue” (Samis 7).

The Paper Sculpture Book

The Paper Sculpture Book is a catalogue produced for The Paper Sculpture Show. The book invites the reader “to assemble three-dimensional sculptures from flat pages designed by 29 established and emerging contemporary artists” (Cabinet Magazine). This catalogue encourages active participation by offering activities that modify the book itself. “The curators’ introduction adopts the open-ended and

playful spirit of the project to address the complicated and often contradictory issues raised by an exhibition and art book in which the artists and visitors collaborate to make the works of art: Who are the true creators of these pieces? What is the role of the viewers/builders?" (Cabinet Magazine).

Findings

Audio Tours

Participants did not comment on the traditional audio tour.

Respondents noted that the build-your-own audio tour allows museum visitors to select the commentaries they wish to listen to, based on their preferences. As museum visitors, the participants stated the advantages of self-selected audio tours included enabling the viewer "to travel beyond [their] usual path," and that choice is powerful for overcoming time constraints or being able to focus on their favourite content. Disadvantages included potentially missing important artifacts because of self-selection and "negating the curator's vision" of the exhibition. As professionals who exhibit works in museums, the participants defined one advantage as being able to "engage a wider audience." As professionals, they defined one disadvantage whereby the viewer is not expected to "follow the flow set up by the gallery."

Respondents noted that the soundscape or musical playlist audio tour offers a non-traditional way to connect with the exhibition through either a self-selected playlist or museum-created music. As visitors, the participants thought it was advantageous to be able to set a mood that traditional gallery settings do not normally offer, and draw in the audience. As professionals, they liked the option of being able to utilize another element, sound, for an exhibition if they so chose. The disadvantage is that, as professionals, they may not want those sounds connected to their work.

Catalogues

There are several advantages and disadvantages of the traditional catalogue, as defined by the participants. As visitors, the advantages include having a physical object to take away that is an artistic endeavour of its own. The quality of the content is expected to be excellent in that "people have put a great deal of thought and care into it" and catalogues "tend to have well-thought-out writing. As visitors, the disadvantages of traditional catalogues included notions that they are expensive, environmentally wasteful, easily outdated, and do not have localized content. As professionals, they found catalogues to be advantageous as a permanent record of an exhibition they produced, which can travel to other destinations. There is a certain prestige of being in a catalogue. The disadvantage is that a catalogue required extra funding to produce.

Print-on-demand is a relatively new way to produce books, where fewer books need to be printed compared to traditional publishing where economies of scale usually require larger runs. The use of digital printing technologies allow for more affordable short-run printing. With print-on-demand, museums can offer the same catalogue of artifacts with different versions of the accompanying essays and texts.

Visitors can select which version of the catalogue they prefer. For example, a print-on-demand catalogue could target a specific audience, such as having a version for adults with expert essays and a version for children where the essays are replaced with puzzles. As visitors, the participants thought it advantageous to have customized catalogues based on local content or local languages. They commented that a disadvantage, from a visitor point of view, was that localized content “doesn’t give outside points of view,” which I infer to mean that if the content is too localized then the catalogue will be insular, lose an external or global perspective, and have less substance. As professionals, a print-on-demand catalogue offers the advantages of creating relationships between artistic communities, who I infer could take part in creating the content, and offering a “greater variety of points of view.” As professionals, the disadvantages include not having one’s work featured internationally, if, as I infer, the content is too localized to be of interest to global audiences.

The eBook, a digital book accessed through eBook reader software on devices such as the Kindle or iPad, are becoming increasingly popular. Since April 2011, Amazon sells more eBooks than printed books, at a ratio of 100 print books to 105 Kindle eBooks (Los Angeles Times). As visitors, participants saw the advantages of eBook catalogues as being cheaper to produce, efficient, somewhat interactive, and the inclusion of localized content in different versions. The disadvantages include having to buy an eBook reader, alienating those who can’t afford it, and not having the physical catalogue to peruse. As professionals, they noted the advantages of an eBook catalogue include cheaper production, ease of updating text or images, and being able to share information. The disadvantages including not being able to afford an eBook reader and an assumption that the content will be “less polished.”

Conclusion

Participants saw the advantages in offering customizable audio tours and localized content for catalogues. However, they expressed concern over negating the curator’s or artist’s vision for an exhibition and the flow of the gallery space, or that the visitor may miss something important, if visitors are able to build their own tours based on self-selected themes. As well, they thought the exhibition may become superficial if the visitor does not follow the curatorial influence of the show. They noted that the curator or artist sets up the exhibition in a particular way and the show is meant to be read in that way.

They were uneasy about the possibility that the visitor experience could become too focused to the visitor’s interests if the visitor could self-select what they want to see. That is, if visitors choose to see only what they like, they will not be exposed to new artifacts or ideas. The visitor will fall into a spiral of self-affirmation, missing the larger concepts that the curator or artist is communicating, and possibly have a more superficial experience.

Some participants believed that the use of technology in the museum lessens the experience and that the museum is a place to detach from outside distractions. As well, not having the necessary technology, such as smartphones or eBook readers, may alienate visitors.

4.8 Workshop: Public Art and Design Visitor Guides and Plaques

This research involved conducting a workshop with undergraduate design students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. There were 12 participants and the workshop was conducted in March 2011. The topic of the workshop was in the area of visitor guides and plaques for public art. The purpose of the workshop was to determine how students would deliver information about public art through visitor guides and plaques. This was a user-centered design approach where students are invited to invent visitor engagements they would enjoy. They were encouraged to think of future technologies that may not be viable yet.

Participants

This workshop had 12 undergraduate design students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta.

Recruitment

Students were recruited during a design class with permission from their instructor. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and had no bearing on their academic performance.

Methods and Procedures

Students were given a brief presentation on visitor engagements and public art. They were broken out into groups, given a scenario of a visitor engagement, and asked to complete a mind-mapping exercise on paper. After completing the exercise, there was a class discussion of the results. I collected the responses, with the students' permission. The students signed consent forms.

Half of the participants were given the following information:

“Visitor guides contain information such as floor plans of the museum, general information about the museum, and information about the exhibits. How can the concept of a visitor guide be applied to public art/design using interesting materials or methods for delivering the information?”

The rest of the participants were given the following information:

“When public art/design is installed, it most often has a plaque to explain who is the artist, name of the piece, benefactors, and other detail information. How can we apply interesting materials or methods for delivering information to plaques for public artworks?”

Case Studies

Case studies were used to develop the basic topics of the workshop. I reviewed my collection of visitor guides I had acquired from my museum visits and brought examples to the workshop. As part of a previous project to design signage for public

art, I had a series of images of plaques for public art in Edmonton. I reviewed these images prior to the workshop.

Findings

Visitor Guides

Visitor guides for museums offer information on exhibitions and often include floor plans of the layout. Students were asked how they would use the concept of the visitor guide to public art, where the area in question extends much further than the confines of the walls of a single building. Students indicated an interest in creating visitor guides and maps that are interactive, mobile, allow for exploration, and offer different means of delivering the information through audio and visual channels. Interactivity took on both physical and digital forms. One group suggested a passport where visitors to public artworks can collect stickers that can be redeemed for discounts and the other group suggested using tokens that can be used to vote on artworks. Students thought mobile devices, such as smartphones, could scan barcodes on location so the visitor can learn more or text “a special number for more information.” A mobile device, such as an iPad or eBook, could be updated based on the visitor’s location. Technology could track the various locations the visitor goes and deliver a map or list of artworks seen, after the fact, documenting each individual tour. One group mentioned offering both a printed guidebook that could be picked up at central hub locations and a digital directory offered at transit stations. As well, they stated that the information could be accessed through Google Maps. Locations to public art could be indicated using lines, steps or colours the visitors can follow, and could lead them “off the beaten track” as an opportunity for exploration. The students suggested tuning into a radio station or installing a loudspeaker onsite as a means of communicating public art information, as well as augmented reality technology and optical recognition.

Plaques

Plaques installed at public art sites offer information about the artworks. Students were asked how they would modify the concept of the plaque for public art. Their responses focused on interactive, mobile technology, and multiple means of delivering the information. Both groups mentioned signage that integrated with the site, either in the ground or on sidewalks nearby. One group mentioned a plaque that could fold out and pull-off stickers that the visitor can keep or stick elsewhere. Both groups mentioned puzzles. One group looked at mobile technology, such as an iPhone app, and the other group suggested using barcodes that can be read by mobile phones (QR codes). Both groups mentioned audio as a means of delivering information, where the visitor’s voice could be recorded or the visitor could push a button to hear the information. Hidden messages that could only be seen in the dark could offer an element of mystery. Students suggested using word of mouth. One student suggested having no plaque, asking the question “why label?”

Conclusion

Students defined various means by which they would deliver information about public art. These methods focused on interactivity, mobile technology, offering multiple ways of getting the information, and opportunities for exploration.

4.9 Workshop: Public Art and Design Documentation

This research involved conducting a workshop with undergraduate design students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. There were 12 participants and the workshop was conducted in March 2011. The topic of the workshop was documentation of public art and design. The purpose of the workshop was to determine what public art students would document and how they define public art. This was a user-centered design approach and the information acquired was used in designing the prototype of the mobile website for documenting public art and design in Edmonton.

Participants

This workshop had 12 undergraduate design students from the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta.

Recruitment

Students were recruited during a design class with permission from their instructor. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and had no bearing on their academic performance.

Methods and Procedures

The workshop was conducted in two parts, several days apart. In the first part of the workshop, students were given a brief presentation on public art and design in Edmonton. They were shown a map of Edmonton divided into quadrants and were asked to select a quadrant. In the quadrant they selected they were asked to document the public art present by filling out a form and taking photographs. They could define what is public art however they saw fit, as long as the work was in the public domain and not in a private space where they would be trespassing. In the second part of the workshop, students brought the photos and forms they used to catalogue public art in their quadrants. Each student presented their documentation and discussed why they chose to record the items. After completing the review, there was a class discussion of the results. I collected the responses, with the students' permission. The students signed consent forms. This workshop was audio recorded.

Findings

Data Collected



Fig 4.9.1: Map of areas to document

The students catalogued public art in ten quadrants: D3, D4, D5, D6, D8, W4, W5, W6, W7, and W9. They were asked to take photos and add the artworks' locations to their maps. They were asked to record a description of the artwork, tag the artwork with keywords, determine whether it was a permanent or temporary installation, the name of the artist or creator, the year of the artwork, whether they liked it and any additional information they thought noteworthy.

The responses for descriptions included the artwork title, details of what the artwork looked like, or a title they devised. Tags varied from factually descriptive tags ("green," "patina," "sculpture," "cityscape," and "historical") to opinions ("heart," "sleazy," "busy," and "look up"). Most of the works documented were permanent. Most students did not know the artist's name or the year so they left those responses blank or wrote "unknown." Several students noted if they liked the artwork with a "yes" or "no." Additional information included further descriptions of the work, such as "encourages people to ride bikes instead of cars" and "making an otherwise dull building look better." When asked whether the students felt the data requested was comprehensive, they agreed it was and did not suggest other information that should be collected.

The Public Art and Design Documented

The students did catalogue artworks they liked and ones they disliked, giving a range of images. As expected, students considered both authorized public art and unauthorized graffiti to be public art worth documenting. Authorized public art includes works commissioned or acquired by official bodies, such as the Edmonton Arts Council and The Works, private institutions, such as the University of Alberta, businesses, and citizens.



Fig 4.9.2: Authorized public art

Graffiti includes those works created on property without authorization.



Fig 4.9.3: Graffiti

Unexpectedly, some students catalogued images of unintentional public art, signage, and storefront displays or advertising. Unintentional art included items that happened to form an interesting image but were not intended as public art. As one student stated, “I approached this area as some things that I knew were public art and some things that were unintentional art.”



Fig 4.9.4: Unintentional public art

The students were interested in the typography of vintage signage on buildings. As a student comments, “It’s probably not meant to be public art but I really like the old signage. I accidentally noticed when I looked up and there were these old signs all over the building.” Another student stated, “I know it’s not art in a textbook sense but I think it’s beautiful so I included it.”



Fig 4.9.5: Signage

Some students documented storefronts, business signs, and advertising. One of the advertising images had been modified through graffiti and so took on a new meaning. In commenting on why a certain image within a business was documented, a student expressed an interest in the subject matter, “I took a picture of the entrance to Devine because everyone needs more robots.”



Fig 4.9.6: Public art at a business location

Defining Public Art and Design

At the outset, students were asked to document public art in Edmonton based on their definition of public art. They tended to catalogue works that they found interesting, whether or not they actually liked the art. “[I documented] anything where I thought it was worth going out of way to see it.” Some students eschewed business-related works. “There’s interesting things to look at, like store fronts, but I don’t really consider those public art. Anything interesting and was somewhat

intentful” (Participant response). However, others chose to include them. One student commented on the subjectivity of defining public art, “Some things you can see it as a piece of art, but some people might not see it as that, so it was interesting to look at things and evaluate whether it was legitimate or not.” Another student commented on public art’s relationship to architecture, “For me, public art is an afterthought. It’s added to a space to compliment it, because if it’s integrated from the beginning then it’s almost architecture, which has its own value.” One student documented as much as possible by stating, “[I documented] everything I hadn’t seen before. I’m not from Edmonton. I wasn’t expecting as much stuff that I found. There’s more than I thought.”

Relationships with Public Art

This workshop had an impact on the students’ relationship with public art. Several stated that they were encouraged to engage with public art more. “I work on this block and so many of things were outside my door so it was a chance to look at them.” One student stated, “I really looked around more and thought about it, where usually I wouldn’t.” Students noted they saw more public art when they were intentional in doing so. “Walking around and looking for things is always fun but it’s so impossible to do if you’re not intentional about it.” One student stated, “It made me look up. I didn’t really notice that stuff before. It made me look at different places in Edmonton and think ‘oh, Edmonton has that.’ That’s cool.”

A few students decried that the dearth of interesting graffiti in Edmonton. One student stated, “There’s so many things that I would always think of as cool bits of graffiti and now they’re all gone... It renewed my anger towards Capital City Cleanup.” One student expressed an appreciation for graffiti by commenting, “It’s such an exciting culture I wish we had more of it. Edmonton could loosen up a bit... making the city a little more colourful.” The same student expressed that by “travelling to areas like going to Europe this past summer and being in London, you’re exposed to so much public art and so much graffiti and so much self-expression you realize that Edmonton is really lacking... maybe people don’t care, or are not risky enough, or don’t want to express themselves.”

Challenges and Constraints

Since the workshop was conducted in March, students had to contend with cold weather. Snow obscured some of the works. Others found that some works were difficult to access because their location was out of reach. Some of the quadrants had few works to catalogue. “There wasn’t a whole lot there, just a lot of parking lots.”

One student expressed concern about revealing graffiti to city officials since the city officials may choose to remove it. “One down side is people may expose hidden graffiti and we may not want that.”

Conclusion

As predicted, students considered both authorized public art and unauthorized graffiti to be public art and design worth documenting. Some students lamented the lack of extensive or impressive graffiti in Edmonton. In reviewing the images the

students presented, they considered interesting store window displays and vintage signage on buildings to be worthy of cataloguing. An unexpected result was that some students documented unintentional public art. The students indicated they learned more about public art and design in Edmonton.

The inclusion of unintentional art in the students' images impacts the public art and design mobile website. The workshop raises questions as to whether the database will be overwhelmed by users taking photos of various items that they framed in such a way as to be a subjective art photographs produced by photographer, rather than photojournalistic and objective photographs to document art made by an artist or designer? Does that matter? What is the role of the user as a photographer in framing images of public art?

4.10 Artifact: Edmonton Public Art and Design Mobile Website Prototype

Project Overview

Edmonton is populated with public art and design treasures, some of which are documented in an easily accessible way, and some of which are not. For example, The Works, Edmonton Arts Council and University of Alberta have online information of public art they have acquired or collected. However, not all public art and design is catalogued. This project aims to ignite the interest of the community in these public art and design works and create a comprehensive map to their location. This project sources knowledge from the community and is not attached to any particular organization, as such it is an example of a visitor engagement implemented outside the authority of any organization.

Why Focus on Public Art and Design?

Public art and design enhances the citizens' quality of life, making Edmontonians' daily existence more interesting and dynamic. Public art and design creates an interaction between citizens and their urban environment, adds dimension to civic spaces, and defines the city's identity. The Edmonton Arts Council states, "Public art is considered to be a key component of the attractiveness and identity of a city. It demonstrates the character of communities, strengthens the local economy through an investment in the arts, and is a reflection of a progressive municipality" (Edmonton Arts Council). These ideals are reflected by a quote from The Works that states, "urban beautification enhances the overall environment in which residents live and work" (The Works).

Why Document Public Art and Design in Edmonton?

There are several reasons to create a project around documenting public art and design. Having a catalogue allows the public to find it, including tourists to Edmonton. The community can better know and understand the richness of Edmonton's art and design community, and learn about local and international artists who have helped create Edmonton's public art. This project acts as a venue for

dialogue, allowing for discussion about public art and design, and encouraging the public to engage with art.

Why Use the Community to Document Public Art and Design?

The community can provide rich data and opinions, including factual information such as location or artist name and their own viewpoint on the work that can be shared with others, who may or may not agree, creating a dialogue. The community can document anything they define as public art and design. They are not aligned with a particular cultural institution, and can catalogue works outside of the purview of institutions such as the Edmonton Arts Council or The Works. They can share their explorations of the city and the discoveries they have made, which they may find to be a rewarding experience.

Project Objectives

The objectives of this project are to offer:

- a comprehensive catalogue of public art and design in Edmonton
- a venue in which citizens can share information, engage in dialogue, and discuss experiences with public art and design
- an independent and self-directed learning opportunity

Definitions

GPS stands for Global Positioning System, which is a system that uses satellites to determine the location of objects using latitude and longitude. Many high-end mobile phones, called smartphones (such as the iPhone or Android phones), have the ability to find and track user location through GPS technology.

Geolocation identifies or assesses the location of objects. Geolocation is used to determine the user's current location. GPS is one of many systems used to geolocate objects.

Google Maps is a map service provided by Google. Google offers ways for developers to leverage the Google Map service in creating mapping software or map-based websites. Developers can take information they want to display and "layer" it on top of a Google Map.

Crowdsourcing is the act of generating content by getting a community to contribute (Howe 5). For example, Wikipedia and Youtube are community-based websites that source the crowd for content by offering a venue in which people can contribute.

Case Studies

I investigated several case studies, some of which have community-based or crowdsourced content and some that offer content from the institution's point of view.

Edmonton Public Art Tour

On June 3, 2011, I took a bus tour of public art in Edmonton, hosted by the Edmonton Public Arts Council. The tour was a great asset to my research, in that I was able to see artworks in areas of Edmonton to which I do not normally go. Public arts representatives from across the Province of Alberta attended the tour.

art.mapped

art.mapped is a mobile phone app that catalogues street art and public art. The user can select an image from a collection to learn more about the work and its location. The app allows the user to find works nearby, based on the user's current location. The user could upload art that they documented. This app is a crowdsourced project.

Biosphere

Biosphere is a mobile phone app that offers maps, tours, and audio commentary about Ile Sainte-Helene and Ile de Notre-Dame in Montreal. The user can select a map and tap a pin to learn more about a point of interest. There is audio commentary for the points of interest. The tour option is similar to the map except the user has to option to navigate through a numbered tour using arrow keys. This app is from the institution's point of view.

Downtown Public Art Circuit

Downtown Public Art Circuit is a mobile phone app featuring a tour of public art in Calgary. The user can tap on an artwork to read about it or listen to an audio commentary. The user can navigate through the artworks through "previous" and "next" buttons, or see an overview of the artworks from the map view. This app is from the institution's point of view.

Global Poetry System

The Global Poetry System is a website that allows users to upload poems, as text, photos, audio, and videos, and show the location of the poem on a map. Visitors to the website can find locations on the map and read the poems from that location. "It's based on the idea that poetry is all around us, from gravestones to graffiti, from birthday cards to blogs, in the landscape and in our memories. GPS invites you to take a fresh look at where you are and find the poetry that inspires you" (Global Poetry System). This website is a crowdsourced project.

Historypin

Historypin is both a website and a mobile phone app that allows users to upload (mostly) historical photographs based on the location the image depicts. Visitors can look at photos and read captions by location. "Historypin is a way for millions of people to come together, from across different generations, cultures and places, to share small glimpses of the past and to build up the huge story of human history" (Historypin). This website and app are a crowdsourced project.

Love is Everywhere

Love is Everywhere is a website that allows users to mark the location where they found love and tell a story about it. “Perhaps you stole a kiss at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or took a romantic stroll in Central Park? Share the special places that captured your love for each other...” (Love is Everywhere). This website is a crowdsourced project.

[murmur] Toronto

[murmur] Toronto is an oral documentary project, accessible through the website or a phone call. There are various locations throughout Toronto posted with [murmur] signs. Visitors go to a location and call a phone number on the sign to hear personal stories about the location. “It’s history from the ground up, told by the voices that are often overlooked when the stories of cities are told. ... The smallest, greyest or most nondescript building can be transformed by the stories that live in it. Once heard, these stories can change the way people think about that place and the city at large” ([murmur]). This website is a crowdsourced project.

Portland Public Art

Portland Public Art is a mobile phone app that allows the user to view a Google Map of Portland with coloured pins to indicate where art is located. Each colour represents a type of art such as sculpture, painting, and photography. The user taps a pin and has access to the information about the work. This app is from the institution’s point of view.

Soundwalk

Soundwalk is a mobile phone app that delivers an audio tour of locations in a city, for example, a tour of Ground Zero in New York City. The user is given directions through the audio, as well as a map to view, and listens to stories based on the locations of the tour.

WalkSpace

WalkSpace is a mobile phone app that gives the user directions for a walk, based on famous art walks or prose, so that the user will walk to unexpected places. For example, “Circe” is a remapping from James Joyce’s *Ulysses*. The directions for the walk are layered on a Google Map, based on the current location of the user.

Project Description

The goal of this project is to afford citizens and visitors access to information about any public art and design in Edmonton, regardless of the organization that manages it or whether the artwork is authorized. Users curate the collection, adding the necessary information, through a mobile website. This research seeks to determine how participating in the documentation of public art and design enriches the relationship with public art and design.

This project is a venue, built as a mobile website, whereby the Edmonton community can upload images and mark the location of public art that they already know of, or may discover, as they live in and explore the city. This venue offers a place for discussions as to what is art, what is design, art history, and visual culture issues. Users may upload images, mark the location, describe the piece, state basic information such as name/creator/year, and place it into a category based on type of art. The mobile website is a prototype and is called *Edmonton Art + Design*.

There are no definitions or restrictions as to what public art and design is or what should be documented, except that the artwork is intended for public display. A user could enter information about an authorized public art piece, unauthorized graffiti, a performance, a snow fort, or whatever the user deems worth recording. The work may be permanent or temporary. For example, a user may be walking along, see a sculpture, take a photo with a mobile phone, write a description such as “blue abstract sculpture,” and mark the location. Another user may decide to comment on it. Someone else might document a sculptural bench and a discussion could ensue as to whether the bench constitutes art or design or both or neither.

Why Mobile?

With a mobile phone, a citizen or visitor to Edmonton can access information on a public art or design work at the time the artwork is encountered, as smartphones tend to have geolocation capabilities. The user can learn about the artwork immediately upon discovering it and document it on location. The user can interact with the *Edmonton Art + Design* mobile website while actively engaged with the artwork.

Native Mobile Apps, Mobile Websites and Mobile Web Applications

There are several options when designing for mobile devices: native app, mobile website, and mobile web applications. A native app is built for a specific operating system, such as the iPhone’s iOS operating system or the Android operating system. Native apps are referred to as “apps.” The app can be used only on the operating system for which it was built, and are downloaded and installed on the phone much like software. They have access to the phone’s file system.

Mobile websites are websites that are optimized for a mobile web browser, such as the iPhone’s Mobile Safari browser, instead of for a laptop or desktop computer that has a larger screen size. Depending on the capabilities of the browser, the mobile browser may not have access to the phone’s file system, as is the case for Mobile Safari. This poses a problem if a developer wants to access the photos taken with the phone since the browser does not have access to them. Mobile websites are not operating-system specific and can be viewed in any sufficiently modern mobile browser.

A mobile web application is a mobile website that offers software accessible within the browser, such as webmail, video-sharing sites like Youtube, or photo-sharing sites like Flickr. Similar to mobile websites, mobile web applications are not operating-system specific, can be viewed in any sufficiently modern mobile browser, and may not have access to the phone’s file system.

For the purpose of this document, I refer to the *Edmonton Art + Design* project as a mobile website. Although aspects of it may be defined as a mobile web application, I find it unlikely that users know the difference, based on my own use of mobile websites and mobile web applications.

Why a Mobile Website?

A mobile website has the advantage of being available to any mobile browser, regardless of operating system (Devlin). They offer much of the same features as a native app, with the flexibility of easy updates. That is, the user does not have to download and reinstall the app to receive new features and fixes. The user is afforded these updates every time the website is visited. However, some browsers, notably the Mobile Safari browser does not allow access to the file system which means, for example, a user cannot upload a photo to a website. In that case, an alternative browser app may be downloaded and installed to facilitate file system access.

Project Phases

The project cycle for the *Edmonton Art + Design* mobile website included the following phases:

- Initial proposal – outlining the basic goals and ideas for the application
- Initial research – research into interaction design, best practices for mobile web design, technologies available for implementing the project
- Workshops – two workshops with design students at the University of Alberta for initial feedback prior in March 2011
- Features lists – defining functionality to be included
- Design concepts – initial sketches for layout and functionality
- Implementation – building a mockup of the prototype as website, with minimal functionality
- Surveys – acquiring feedback on the prototype from potential users
- Planning future iterations – using feedback and research to further refine future versions of the prototype

Initial Proposal

The initial proposal outlined the basic goals and ideas for the project. In the early stages of the project I decided to forego having a user login system where the user could log in to the website, with a username and password, to add or edit information. A login system would be beneficial in tracking users and allowing them to see their contributions. However, implementing a login system would have been a large project in itself that would not directly benefit my research. The initial proposal was presented at a “Let’s Talk: How to Make Research Go Public,” a series of talks by graduate students within the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta on February 2, 2011. The proposal garnered positive feedback and received funding.

Initial Research

My initial research included reviewing case studies, learning best practices for mobile web design, and investigating the technologies available for implementing

the project such as the Google Maps service, and how to implement geolocation through a mobile web browser. My research continued throughout the project.

Workshops

As discussed earlier in this document, I conducted two workshops with undergraduate design students at the University of Alberta in March 2011. By participating in the documentation of public art, students indicated they learned more about it and became more engaged with it. The students documented unintentional public art, which was an unexpected result. Many of the student responses indicated a preference for interactive and mobile delivery of public art information. These results confirm that an interactive mobile solution for delivering information about public art and design is of interest to them.

Features Lists and Design Concepts

My features list defined the functionality to be included in the prototype. My initial features list included a map of artworks in Edmonton with the ability for the users to zoom into works near their current location, tours or walks that could be added by the user, a catalogue of the collection with multiple filters for sorting information, the capability of adding artwork information and photos, a rating system, a discussion area, a calendar of events, and search. I considered the possibility of including audio that could be recorded by the user, similar to the [murmur] Toronto case study.

As I researched more on how to implement the functionality and thought more on the workflows, I found allowing the user to create their own tours to be a complicated task. I could either allow users to select points on the map to make a tour or use the mobile phone GPS to track their movements as they walked their tour. Both options would require more time to construct and research into usability to complete so I considered an option where an expert curated the tours. In the end, I decided to have the user create collections based on themes they define, similar to the collections section of Historypin. The interface would be simpler than a user-created tour and I would be able to afford more personalization for the user.

In my early sketches of the layout and workflow, the sections of the website included a home page with an overview map of public art in Edmonton, a works or catalogue section, a collections section for user-created sets of artworks, a “near me” page where the users could see a map of nearby artworks based on their location, search, and an “add an artwork” section for contributing artworks to the catalogue.

Implementation

Information Architecture

As I built out the website prototype, the sections of the website evolved into *Home*, *Artworks*, *Sets*, *Map*, *Nearby*, and *Search*.

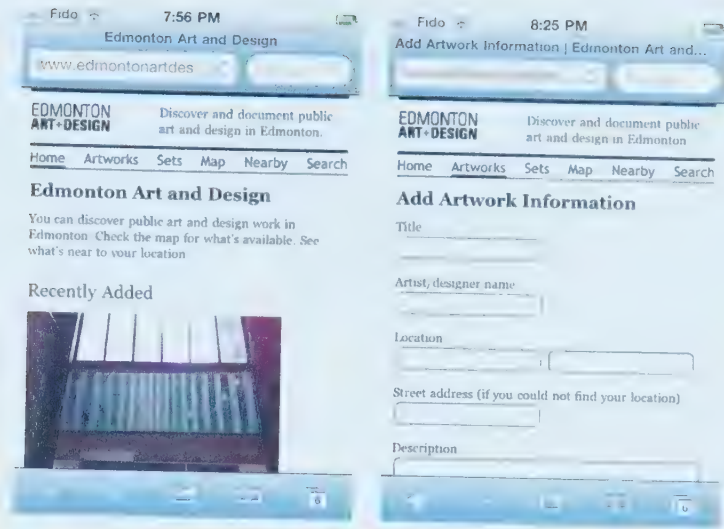


Fig 4.10.1: Screenshots of the mobile website

The *Home* page features recent works added, to indicate to the user that the site is active and updateable. *Artworks* became the title to the catalogue of public art instead of “works.” Adding an artwork was included in the *Artworks* section instead of having its own button on the main navigation. *Sets* became the name for the section where users could create collections based on themes of their choosing. *Map* was still present and had the same functionality. *Nearby* was the title given to the map that would show users artwork near them through geolocation. *Search* was still included in the main navigation.

Planned Prototype Functionality for Adding Artworks

I planned to have the website prototype offer the ability to add artworks to the database at the location where users were engaged with the work.

Adding an artwork was to entail four steps:

1. Look at the map provided to see if the artwork has been already added. This would prevent duplication.
2. Find the current location using the browser’s geolocation functionality. If geolocation was not available, the user could enter the address manually.
3. Add information about the artwork into a form. If the user did not know the information, the field could remain blank. The information requested was to include:
 - Title – title of the work
 - Artist/designer name – name of the work’s creator(s)
 - Location – provided through geolocation or manually entered
 - Description – a short description of the artwork
 - Tags – keywords to describe the artwork
 - Category – type of artwork, e.g. mural, sculpture
 - Year created – the year the work was created or installed

- Permanent or temporary – whether the artwork is a permanent fixture or transitory
 - Posted by – the user’s name
4. Upload an image taken with the mobile phone’s camera.

This functionality was built into several test pages to determine the best user interface workflow. However, it has not been implemented into the prototype. I determined that before committing this functionality into a prototype, I would do user testing with web pages that mock up the workflow but do not actually function. For example, the pages for adding an artwork display a form but the form does not connect to a database. The website was populated with a few sample artworks.

Prototype for User Testing

The prototype utilized in user testing has several web pages, most with mock-ups of planned functionality and/or sample data for display. The *Home* page displays an example of a recently added public artwork. The *Artworks* page shows a brief list of sample artworks. The user can tap one of the works to see detailed sample information or tap “Add an artwork” to try out the workflow. The *Sets* page was not completed as this functionality had a lower priority. *Map* displayed a Google Map of Edmonton with a few sample artworks indicated. *Nearby* displayed a Google Map of Edmonton with a few sample artworks indicated near the user’s current location. *Search* shows a search bar but the functionality was not implemented.

Surveys

This research involved conducting surveys with students at the University of Alberta. There were 5 participants and the surveys were conducted in August 2011. The topic of the surveys was to gather opinions on the prototype’s intended functionality. This is a user-centered design approach and the information acquired was used in creating a features list for further iterations of the prototype.

Participants

The surveys had 5 participants from the greater University of Alberta community.

Recruitment

Four participants were recruited in the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science building at the University of Alberta. This building was selected because there is a large and colourful public artwork embedded in the floor that could be used as an example when speaking to participants. One participant was recruited in the FAB building. Participants were informed that the survey was voluntary.

Methods and Procedures

Participants who were seated in the common areas of the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science building were approached and asked if they would like to participate in a survey. Participants were informed that the survey was anonymous. If the participant agreed, he or she was given a demonstration of the prototype’s

intended functionality using an iPhone and the Safari Mobile browser. The participants signed consent forms.

Findings

When asked about public art, participants indicated they enjoyed making public art discoveries, and thought they could learn more about it through the mobile website. They indicated that they liked the idea of being able to participate, though approximately 40% of the participants responded that they were unlikely to actually add any entries, preferring to read the information provided or simply experience the art without mediation. A few responses indicated that the participants may not remember to use the mobile website as it would not immediately come to their mind to look up information using their phone. When asked about using a crowdsourcing approach, most participants approved of the approach, with one participant mentioning Wikipedia as a good example of crowdsourcing. Another participant indicated the quality of the information provided would be important. The responses broached the topics of reliable user-provided data and the quality of information. When asked whether there was a need to moderate entries, participants indicated that moderation was necessary, possibly through a “report this entry” system for questionable entries. Participants noted that they would use a rating or popularity system if it were implemented. One participant commented that a rating system could be used as a filter to find results.

Conclusion

Overall the response to the prototype was positive. The results of the survey signals a need to ensure the information contributed by users is reliable. More thought is required on how to ensure the information collected for the mobile website is quality data, and how or if moderation should be implemented.

Participants indicated that they would not necessarily think to use their phone when engaging with public art. It is possible that a larger companion website for use at home would help. As well, the citizens and visitors of Edmonton would need to be educated about the mobile web application, perhaps through early-adopters, word-of-mouth, and public arts mailing lists.

Future Iterations

In the short term, future iterations of the prototype may have the following changes, based on testing and survey results:

- remove the *Home* link from the navigation to remove clutter since users can click the logo instead
- combine the *Map* and *Nearby* pages into one, with a high-level map of Edmonton to start and an option to click *Nearby* to zoom in
- change the name of *Sets* to *Collections*
- when adding information about an artwork, change the “description” field to “story,” where users can tell a story about the work – description may be redundant if there is an image and story has a more playful and inviting ring

In the long term, certain functionality should be added in future versions:

- User account – the ability to make a user account, which tracks who enters what information, similar to Wikipedia or YouTube
- Edit – the ability to edit the information for an artwork, and track the most recent version
- Discussion – the ability to comment or discuss artworks
- Rating – the ability to rate, or show preference for, certain artworks
- Report this – the ability to report questionable entries, similar to functionality on YouTube
- Audio – the ability to record and add audio information
- Tours and walks – the ability to make a tour or walk of selected artworks
- Filtered search – the ability to refine search results through various filters

4.11 Artifact: Entitle

Project Overview

Entitle was a work exhibited in the Spaces&Places:VisioningMcLuhan@100 show at the Latitude 53 art gallery, in Edmonton, Canada in June–July 2011. The exhibition was part of a University of Alberta initiative that marked the centenary of Marshall McLuhan's birth.

Entitle utilized visitor participation to create interaction with the other nine artworks exhibited in the show. For each piece that was displayed in the exhibition, the visitor was asked to contribute an alternative title for the work through a website, entitle.ca. The results were displayed as a projection in the gallery and on the website.

The website, entitle.ca, was designed to be usable through mobile phones so visitors could contribute titles while in the gallery. The website offered images of the pieces so anyone who accessed entitle.ca (whether they had been to the gallery or not) could enter a title, allowing the global community the opportunity to participate.

Exploring the Ideas of Marshall McLuhan

In *Exploration of the Ways, Means and Values of Museum Communication with the Viewing Public*, McLuhan discusses how visitors to a gallery or museum interact with the labeled objects.

“There’s a phrase of James Joyce, ‘Who gave you that numb?’ Every name is a numb because it ends tension. When you have labeled something, perception flickers out. You have classified it and that’s the end of perception. You can start thinking about it if you like, but you stop perceiving. The artist is never content with labels or names or categories. He’s always insisting on sticking a pin right into you.” (McLuhan 61)

McLuhan states, “You find a person will walk up to an object and look at it casually, read the label, give it a cursory glance, and walk on. They have not really looked at anything, because they are date-oriented and they figure that now they’ve got the answer to that...” (McLuhan 4). In response to this scenario, he explores ideas of

audience participation, creative involvement and co-production. He encourages ways of making the audience into information producers (as opposed to audience as data assimilators), asking the audience to provide information about the items displayed (McLuhan 12). The audience is the environment in which the object is placed and creates meaning for the object. “An audience is the surround. It is the new environment for the artifact” (McLuhan 2). By asking the audience to participate in producing information, the meaning the audience creates for the object becomes apparent and perception of the object does not end at merely reading the label.

Project Objectives

The purpose of this project was to use the act of naming to push the viewer’s perception of the artworks further, to subvert the viewer’s tendency to read the label and move on, and overturn the viewer’s acceptance of the artists’ titles as the only option. By allowing the visitor to participate in the naming of the artworks in the exhibit, they become co-producers of the information, rather than data-assimilators. They create meaning for the objects in the exhibit. By displaying the titles as a projection in the gallery and on a website, visitors acquire feedback about their title and those titles contributed by others.

Case Studies

Write Your Own Label at Tate Britain

Tate Britain has a project, called Write Your Own Label, where visitors can label artworks through the website. “Would you like to see your ideas about art on the walls of Tate Britain? We’re asking visitors to write about any work of art on display at Tate Britain which especially interests them” (Tate Britain).

Play at the Van Abbemuseum

The Van Abbemuseum, in Eindhoven, Netherlands, had an exhibition called Play. One of the parts of the exhibition asked visitors to take on a role: pilgrim, tourists, flaneur, and worker. “The title of the exhibition describes possible roles that a museum visitor can play when looking at an artwork or exhibition. Each of these roles experiences the museum in a different way and each will have their own ‘tools’ to explore the museum” (Van Abbemuseum). One of the museum professionals interviewed explained that the flaneur role was asked to write didactic information about the artworks and put it on the artwork label. According to the participant, “It was a way of subverting the museum experience, that top-down institutional-bureaucratic way of experiencing museums. It was basically saying you can defile one of our institutional mainstays.”

Project Description

This project includes a website, optimized for mobile devices but useable on desktop computers, and a projection in the gallery. There were nine artworks in the gallery, excluding *Entitle*. Each artwork had its own label on the wall, with the artist’s name and the title. *Entitle* asked visitors in the gallery to contribute alternative titles for

the nine artworks and a nickname for themselves through the website. There were no restrictions as to what the visitor could write.



Fig 4.11.1: Screenshots of the *Entitle* mobile website

The projection was formatted in two columns. The first column displayed one image for each artwork and the most recently contributed title, who added it, and when it was added. The second column displayed a number of titles and names, in order in which they were added over time.

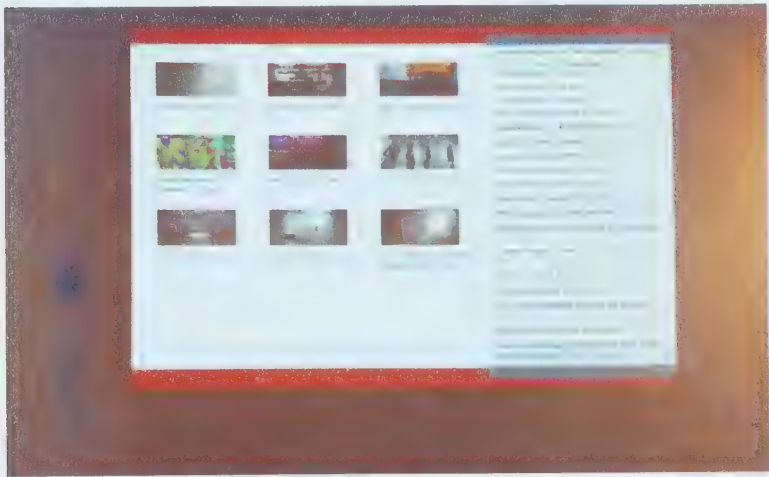


Fig 4.11.2: *Entitle* projection

There was signage with instructions on how to use *Entitle* and cards to take away so visitors could contribute to *Entitle* away from the gallery.

I chose to not include *Entitle* as one of the artworks that could be titled. *Entitle* is a meta-artwork, meant to act as a platform for commenting on the other artworks. I found that when discussing *Entitle* in its early stages, it became clear that individuals thought they could only title *Entitle* and not the other artworks. Once it was explained they could name the other artworks and not *Entitle*, they grasped the concept much quicker.

Project Phases

The project cycle for *Entitle* included the following phases:

- Initial research – research into Marshall McLuhan and his ideas about museums and labels, and technologies needed to execute the project
- Initial proposal – outlining the basic goals and ideas for the project, submitted to the Space&Places:VisioningMcLuhan@100 committee
- Design concepts – initial sketches for layout and functionality
- Implementation – building a website and database, designing signage, and installing into the exhibition
- Observation – monitoring participation in the project
- Surveys – acquiring feedback on the project from users
- Artist feedback – acquiring feedback from the artists in regards to the project
- Planning future iterations – using feedback and research to further refine future versions of the prototype

Initial Research and Proposal

My initial research investigated Marshall McLuhan's thoughts on museums from conference proceedings, based on a seminar held at the Museum of the City of New York in 1967. I submitted my proposal to Space&Places:VisioningMcLuhan@100 and the committee approved my submission. I researched the technologies I would need to implement this project.

Design Concepts

My design concepts centered on the functionality of the website, what information should be captured in the database, and what information should be projected in the gallery. I decided to project the information based on a timeline, from most recent to oldest contributed title, as that may have offered some insight into who the audience was at certain times in the gallery.

The signage for the project explained what the project was about and provided instructions on how to use the website. My initial concept was for the signage to be available at each artwork's location but that proved problematic as it interfered with the branding of the show. The signage was redesigned to be displayed at the projection. I added cards for visitors to take away, so they could add titles away from the gallery and learn more about the project. Cards were placed in a pocket on the signage.

Implementation

The website had four sections: *Entitle*, *Results*, *About*, and *Survey*.

Entitle was the home page and it displayed an image of each of the artworks and the most recently added title. The user could tap the image to go to a page to add a title. The *Results* section displayed links to the titles contributed for each artworks or the

user could all results. The *About* page explained the project. The *Survey* page displayed a brief survey that asked participants about their experience with *Entitle*.

The projection used a web browser that utilized the gallery's wireless internet, to display recent titles in real time.

Visitor Engagement

This research involved making observations, having casual conversations with visitors to the gallery, and reviewing the data collected through the website and the survey. This research took place from June 23 to July 23, 2011.

Latitude 53 had a series of special events on Thursday evenings called the Latitude 53 Patio Series. Most observations and conversations occurred during the patios.

Participants

Participants included visitors to the Latitude 53 gallery.

Recruitment

Recruitment involved using signage and cards to convey instructions and information about the project. I approached individuals in the gallery, explained the project, and handed out cards.

Methods and Procedures

I observed participants looking at the projection and using their mobile phones to interact. I approached individuals in the gallery, explained the project, and handed out cards. I reviewed the data submitted by participants.

Findings

Data Collected

There were 119 titles submitted; however, nine of the submissions were the original titles by the artists and were entered into the database by me. The total number of titles submitted by participants was 110 titles. Of the 110 titles, 103 appear to be unique titles and 7 appear to be double entries. For the purpose of these findings, I am stating that 110 titles were contributed by participants.

There were 62 unique names submitted, with three names left blank, for a total of 65 unique names. This number does not represent an accurate count of the number of participants since one participant could use several names, or several participants could use the same name.

Of the 110 title submitted, 72% were submitted using a mobile phone (79/110 responses) and 28% were submitted on desktop computers (31/110 responses). This data implies that the majority of the titles were contributed in the gallery or while the participant was present in the gallery, and the rest were added at a desktop or laptop at home, at work, or elsewhere. Of the 79 responses submitted by mobile phone, 80% were submitted on iPhone (63/79 responses), 15% on an Android phone,

4% on a BlackBerry, and one response was submitted on a webOS device such as a Palm.

There were nine artworks that could be titled by participants.

Original Title	Artist Name	Number of Responses
Reconstituted Dialogue	Andrew Buszchak	6
Lines	Anna Tzini	13
Constructing a Physical History of Marshall McLuhan	Sergio Serrano and Jeffrey Klassen	13
Program Massage	France Dubois	17
Silence / Noise	Kyle Armstrong	7
Prolongation	John Luna	16
Social Object 001	Jenna Hill	12
WOTD	Karen Campbell	16
Great Journeys of Our Times	Amanda RT Thomson	10

The majority of title submissions occurred during the Thursday evening patios.

Thursday, June 23 had 29 submissions. This was the opening reception for the exhibition, and a patio night. Thursday, June 30 had 38 submissions and Thursday, July 21 had 18 submissions. Patio evenings accounted for 80% of the submissions (88 /110 responses).

Observations and Conversations



Fig 4.11.3: Participant using *Entitle*

My observations took place during the Latitude 53 Patio Series, on Thursday evenings from June 23 to July 22, 2011. During the patios, there were many visitors

to Latitude 53. The majority of visitors were approximately 20 to 40 years old and supported the arts.

Many visitors stood back from the projection and took some time to approach the instructions. Some did not approach the instructions. Several picked up cards from the pocket on the signage. Most participants I observed read the instructions either on the signage or the cards.

There was more interaction with *Entitle* during the patios. The patios have a spirit of camaraderie, with groups of friends visiting with each other. I observed visitors interacting with each other as they were interacting with *Entitle*. One group of three individuals gathered around a mobile phone and appeared to be entering a submission together. One individual mentioned the desire to overwrite a title with which he did not agree with his own title. Another individual mentioned he used *Entitle* to communicate with his companion; he added the title “Hi, Leanne!” from the nickname “mom.” Two participants worked together, on separate mobile phones, to add titles as if a game, and mentioned that they really enjoyed the interaction. A few participants mentioned that they would not participate in the gallery because they wanted time to think about their submissions. As it can be difficult to encourage individuals to participate in interactive engagements, particularly in a gallery setting where interaction may be unexpected, the patios afforded a casual and lighthearted way to promote interaction.

I had a conversation with a group of individuals on the topic of self-censorship in the gallery. One of the titles displayed at the time was “Google Butt,” and I asked the group why they thought the participant did not use a stronger curse word. My question concerned why typing text into a website and having it displayed in a projection differed from typing text into a message board on a website, even though both are anonymous. The group agreed it was different to add information to a projection as it felt more public than a message board, in which comments can get buried, and the text typed by a participant is viewed in a gallery where that participant is part of the community. I infer this to mean they thought the participant typed a relatively benign title out of respect for the place in which he or she was a part. I had a conversation with another participant who she had an idea of title but decided not to add the title because she thought it was inappropriate for the gallery.

A few participants inquired about the QR code (a type of barcode) that was embedded with the link to the *entitle.ca* website, and how to use it. They seemed interested to learn about QR codes. A few participants mentioned they did not have a mobile phone and thought they could not participate. I explained that *Entitle* is a website and they could add titles from their computer at home. One participant mentioned feeling marginalized at not being able to participate because he had no mobile phone.

Surveys

The *Entitle* website had a brief survey for participants to complete once they added a title. There were seven participants. When asked if adding a title encouraged them to perceive more about the artworks, five responded in the affirmative. Two responses indicated that participants had used an interactive project before *Entitle*, and five indicated they had not. Six participants affirmed that participating in *Entitle* made

them feel more engaged with the artwork. One participant entered a comment stating, “It made me happy to be creative!” Another participant commented, “I felt more able to comment from afar, to address the work as an image and nothing more.”

Artist Responses

After the exhibition closed, the nine artists in the show were asked their opinion in the titles contributed by participants. Since *Entitle* works to enable visitors to have a dialogue with the artists through titles that interpret the works, allowing the artists to respond back to titles submitted created a provocative discourse on the works. Six of the artists responded.

Participants

The participants included six artists from the exhibition.

Recruitment

The participants were recruited through a direct email. The participants were informed of the nature of my project and that their responses could be included in this document. Participants could choose to have their name included or remain anonymous.

Methods And Procedures

Participants were sent an email that included a link to the list of titles submitted for their artwork, and the following question:

“After reviewing the titles, did contributions from the audience cause you to recontextualize your piece or think about it differently? Why or why not?”

Participants wrote their responses in email.

Findings

The participants indicated that the submitted titles did not cause them to recontextualize their work, but they appreciated the feedback *Entitle* provided and found that responses supported the ideas they were presenting. As one participant stated, “If anything the proposed titles reinforced my intentions and provided feedback which illustrated that the object (which I might add is interactive) was being received as intended.” Another participant stated, “The contributions highlighted existing strengths and weaknesses of the work as we understood it, and therefore did not cause us to recontextualize the work.”

One participant mentioned that the titles caused her to consider what type of audience was seeing her work. As she comments, “there's a couple of responses I think make me think more about audience type rather than about the work itself, which in itself is interesting.” She questioned how familiar the audience was with the ideas she was trying to convey. Another participant responded by looking at how the audience interacts with artworks. Her response stated, “If anything, these made me think of

reasons why sometimes even when we (and I do include myself in that) attend an artistic event and view artworks, we remain very closed to the possibilities they offer us, and browse through as if in a mall, dealing not with ideas but with products, which are to be judged skin-deep by their appearance.”

Most participants acknowledged that some titles were astute, others humourous, and some seemed superficial. As one participant states, “The contributions seemed to be split into two categories. First were titles that evoked aspects of our work, yet were more ambiguous than the original. ... These titles reinforced ideas we were exploring, and focused on the feeling of alienation. The second category was humorous captions that read like a review.”

Two of the participants commented on *Entitle* as a platform. One participant stated, “I had the strong sense that those participating in the exercise did it with very little conscious thought, an immediate reaction to something they did not understand. I can't help but wonder if the ease of the method of communication (texting) lends itself to thoughtlessness and a general disconnectedness from the work and the observer's surroundings.” Another participant stated the following:

“Your project presented a platform, which allowed viewers to actively participate in the exhibition by re-titling, and thereby re-contextualizing, artworks presented at Latitude 53. However, I see this idea of active participation as being confined to your project—that is, a viewer who contributes an alternate title for another exhibited artwork, adds it to your project, while the supposedly re-named artwork continues to be presented in the gallery as it was prior to the contribution of the alternate title.

It seems to me that what is fundamental to *Entitle* is an idea about art that Marcel Duchamp referred to in 1957 as the “Art Coefficient”, wherein he suggested that the creation of meaning in a work of art is never wholly under the control of the artist. The artist presents an artwork as a sort of proposal, which then requires acknowledgment from an audience. From this interaction, meaning and context are attributed to the artwork. Perhaps a project like *Entitle* can help to raise an audience's awareness of the contextualizing potential of their role.

If I recall correctly, participants were able to submit titles via the *Entitle* website, with the possibility of having experienced the exhibition in person only briefly, partially, distractedly (for example, during the opening reception) or although unlikely, not at all. I suspect that the reference images on your website played a significant part in affecting title contributions. Particularly with my project, the title Ozone contributed by “Detroit”, stands out to me more likely as a response to the visual composition of the reference image on the website than the audio recording as presented at Latitude 53. By the way you've designed your project, this is an interesting and subtle quirk, which results from a layer of mediation that may have been overlooked by many of your participants.”

Conclusion

Entitle garnered positive reactions from visitors to the gallery and the artists whose artworks were included. *Entitle* encouraged participation from visitors in the gallery and offered feedback to the artists. Participants used *Entitle* to communicate insights about the artwork or to each other. Several participants worked together on writing titles. *Entitle* offered a look into the self-censorship that may happen with an interactive visitor engagement. The artists responded to the titles but most stated the titles did not cause them to recontextualize their work. Artist responses offered an interesting look at the mediation that happens in a gallery and through technology.

Future Iterations

Entitle is intended to be reused for future exhibitions. I am considering how *Entitle* could be packaged for other individuals or institutions to use in their work. For example, *Entitle* was used a second time in my graduate thesis exhibition.

5.0 Discussion and Analysis

The discussion and analysis falls into four main areas. *The Current Landscape* discusses the results of the research findings based on broad themes and illustrates how visitor engagements can enhance relationships between visitors and museums. *The Independent Visitor* defines how visitor engagements can affect the relationship between the museum and Independent visitors. *Interplay/Intersections* explores how dialogue can mix and intermingle, and interrogates the relationships inherent in the multiplicity of possible readings of a text. *Mediation via the Platform* examines how the design of a visitor engagement can mediate interactions between the museum and the visitor.

5.1 Overview

The research exposed several valid areas for discussion and future actions. The surveys for museum professionals gathered information from 45 respondents and the interviews asked questions of four museum professionals. The surveys covered a range of museum sizes and responses came from several different employment positions. The surveys for visitors had 71 respondents. The workshops offered an opportunity to learn from individuals who are both museum visitors and potential artifact creators who may have their work displayed in museums. The designed artifacts offered a way to explore visitor engagements that were hands-on and encouraged participation.

5.2 The Current Landscape

The Museum and the Community

The museum has a valuable relationship with the community. The research disclosed that the museum enhances citizens' lives, cultivates differing points of view, and offers diverse interpretations of content that promotes differing points of view. The primary purpose of the museum is to benefit audiences by engaging visitors, enabling dialogue, and promoting understanding. Museums should offer challenging programming and act as a venue for asking questions. Museums act as mediator between artifact creators and the general public, providing opportunities for creators to engage visitors and enable deeper understandings of their works.

In the Edmonton community, museums, artifact creators, and residents act as an ecosystem. Among cultural institutions, there needs to be greater communication that exposes gaps in offerings and maintains relationships so that the museum community, as a whole, can grow. Museums need to act as a venue to foster mentoring among artifact creators, and encourage the local writing community to germinate.

The Changing Audience

The research exposed that museums acknowledge that the role of the audience is changing. For example, members of the audience may never walk through the doors of the museum; the audience could experience the museum solely from a distance, via online communication and social media.

The concepts of dialogue and participation are shifting. The museum can no longer expect a two-way dialogue since audiences may not respond directly to museum communications via social media. Rather, audiences can restate the information through their own social media networks or discuss the information offline. Audience members are empowered to create their own interactions with the museums that are outside of the museums' structure; for example, they can use social media such as blogs to comment on museum exhibitions or create their own visitor engagements.

The Purpose of Visitor Engagements

In examining the research, both museum and visitors have similar agendas when it comes to museum engagement. From the museums' point of view, the purpose of visitor engagements is to enhance learning and provide additional interpretive information. From the visitors' point of view, visitors want to have an interesting experience and learn. Both groups defined learning as important, though visitors indicated that an interesting experience was more important than learning something.

From the museum perspective, visitor engagements bring context and focus to the visitor's experience. They encourage dialogue and participation. Layered, flexible visitor engagements cater to different learning styles and enable effective, personalized experiences. Visitor engagements can work to shift the perspectives of museum visitors on a certain topic through didactic information. Visitor engagements need to entertain, guide, and create an experience. However, museums face constraints with visitor engagements, including lack of time, funding, personnel, and expertise.

Visitors indicated they would participate in a visitor engagement if they were interested in the material presented in the exhibition. They wanted to enhance their experience, learn more about exhibits, and engage with the information in a deeper and richer way. They were interested in learning about differing perspectives, and enjoyed learning through hands-on, interactive, and personalized engagements that focus on different learning styles or interests. Since the majority of visitors are of the Independent visitor profile, many indicated that self-directed visitor engagements were preferred. Visitors were constrained by a lack of time or an excess of crowds that deter them from using visitor engagements.

These results demonstrate a need for the design and implementation of visitor engagements that:

- are interactive and personalized
- are flexible and focused on different learning styles

- have self-directed learning components
- meet the time and funding constraints of museums, and
- allow visitors to participate within their time constraints.

5.3 The Independent Visitor

Analysis of the research revealed a disconnect between the types of visitor engagements offered by museums and those that visitors utilize. Although museums provide a variety of visitor engagements, they often rely on tours, activities, or education programs led by museum professionals as a way to offer interactivity, encourage participation, and promote dialogue. Though visitors praised the tours, they indicated that tours did not necessarily meet their needs since the majority of visitors indicated a preference for independent, self-directed learning. They identified with the Independent visitor profile, which was described in my research as a visitor who “prefers to view exhibits independently.” Independent visitors, who do not partake of face-to-face visitor engagements, have fewer options for engaging with the museum through visitor engagements. Visitors indicated that interactive, self-directed, and personalized visitor engagements were important. Visitor engagements that serve independent visitors strengthen the relationship between museums and independent visitors by providing ways in which visitors can interact with the museum on their terms.

5.4 Independent Visitor Engagements

As discussed, the audience for the museum is changing. Many visitors are interacting with the museum on their own terms, through various platforms such as social media where they may rarely engage with the museum directly, eschewing two-way dialogue for other means of interacting. The research revealed most visitors prefer to partake of museums independently. Thus it is imperative that visitor engagements offer self-directed and independent experiences at the minimum. By creating visitor engagements that better serve independent visitors, museums have the opportunity to connect with new audiences on the audience’s terms, allowing museums and visitors to have more meaningful relationships. That said, the research discloses that both visitors and museums are invested in experiences that are individualized and personalized, interactive and participatory, and enable rich dialogue opportunities.

Independent and Self-Directed

Visitor engagements that allow for independent and self-directed museum experiences could take the form, for example, of printed self-guided tours. Independent visitors can experience the museum at their own pace and select the parts of the tour on which they want to spend time. Although the visitor is being guided by an authoritative voice (that of the museum), visitors maintain control over their time commitments and have the option to go off-book and explore.

Individualized and Personalized

Individualized and personalized visitor engagements can create memorable experiences and enhance learning opportunities through customization. Traditionally, educational programming has offered opportunities for customized content, often through tours or demonstrations; however, this type of tour does not provide an independent and self-directed experience. With independent visitors, a personalized experience could take the form of building their own tour based on their preferences. For example, they could use a mobile device to search for tags of interest, prioritize their visit, and acquire recommendations based on their choices, building an experience completely around their individual selections.

Interaction and Participation

The ideas of interaction and participation can have a range of involvement. Simply entering a museum or visiting its website is a form of interaction. Further exploring the roles that interaction could play is worthwhile, for example, actively participating in a game developed for an exhibition is a more involved level of participation. Independent visitors should have the option to interact with the museum on their terms, through a range of involvement.

Dialogue

As with interaction and participation, dialogue has a range of involvement. Traditionally, dialogue could be defined as a two-way conversation between representatives of the museum and its visitors, such as during a demonstration led by a museum professional with visitor response. For independent visitors, dialogue can take many forms. At its most fundamental level, dialogue is choice. If the museum offers visitors the choice between seeing one set of artifacts or a different set of artifacts based on their preferences, the visitor is offered an opportunity for dialogue by making a choice. In another form, dialogue can include hearing opinions from non-experts during an audio tour, or offering an opinion in a blog post. The traditional concept of dialogue is disrupted; the communication is still occurring but not always on direct channels. That said, there is a need for museums to be aware of the disruption and recalibrate their metrics for measuring dialogue to encompass new means of discourse.

5.5 Interplay/Intersections

For the purpose of this document, interplay is defined as a state in which entities exert influence on each other, in a push-pull, back-and-forth, interrelated manner. It is not necessary that one entity reacts to the play of the other; rather, both intermingle and interweave their actions and reactions simultaneously, in an intersecting space.

Interplay occurs in the museum, exposing relationships between the museum, community, and individuals. On one level, the museum itself is a text. The museum has an agenda to fulfill and design choices, such as its architecture or the layout of its galleries, are readable as a physical representation of the agenda. On a different level,

the museum produces texts. The museum writes didactic information for its artifacts, scripts for tours, visitor guides, advertising, and a host of other publications. These publications reflect the agenda of the museum as well as offer context to the content of exhibitions. The museum acts as author to a variety of texts. These texts can be read in a multitude of ways, depending on who is the reader. "The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in the origin but its destination" (Barthes 148). All of the possible readings of a text intermingle and fluctuate with the intended meanings of the text.

In the context of the research, some participants were resistant to the idea of personalized engagements because the curator's or artist's point of view is negated by allowing the visitor to select their experiences on their terms. These participants were concerned that visitors could miss out on important artifacts, or fall into a spiral of affirmation whereby the visitor sees only what they like to see and never experiences new ideas because those ideas are outside the realm of their preferences. I submit that since Independent visitors tend to experience exhibitions on their own, they have never been confined to the curator's or artist's intended reading of an exhibition. Rather, by enabling visitor engagements that build on visitors' preferences, the museum's intended reading and the visitors' inscribed reading of the exhibition intertwine to create new meanings and interpretations for both parties in an intersecting space. The exhibition is never without the curator's vision and the visitor is never without his or her interpretation of the material presented, but it is within the experience of the visitor that these interrelated, and occasionally opposing, ideas mix.

As discussed previously, dialogue, at its most fundamental level, is choice. Dialogue is more than a conversation between multiple parties. Dialogue is more than a discourse between an institution and its constituents. In its basic form, dialogue is a choice, in doing, or saying, something over something else. "But no living word relates to its object in a *singular* way: between the word and its object, between the word and the speaking subject, there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object, the same theme, and this is an environment that is often difficult to penetrate" (Bakhtin 276). This elastic environment is a space where what is said and what is not said have equal footing. The museum can attempt to penetrate this environment through dialogue, most visibly by including a plurality of voices in its texts, and less noticeably as self-directed experiences where the visitor has a multitude of choices to expend.

In regards to the research, the *Entitle* project explores the possibilities of dialogue and the elastic environment of meaning in a museum setting. The artist offered a text in the form of a title. The titles have an interpretive edge; they are weighted with meaning from the artist's perspective, and reflect those ideas articulated and not articulated. "Indeed, any concrete discourse (utterance) finds the object at which it was directed already as it were overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist—or, on the contrary, by the 'light' of alien words that have already been spoken about it" (Bakhtin 276). Since visitors to the exhibition were invited to contribute their own titles, there is a give-and-take where the meaning of the visitor-generated titles bounce off of the artist-

generated titles, the other visitor-generated titles, and all the possible titles never submitted. What was said by one individual may illuminate what was not said by another. "Understanding and response are dialectically merged and mutually condition each other; one is impossible without the other" (Bakhtin 282). The titles contributed by all parties expose the subjectivity surrounding interpretation.

5.6 Mediation via the Platform

The platform in which the visitor engagement is delivered is one of the factors that defines the relationship between the visitor and the museum. The design is not neutral; it mediates the relationship; it imposes itself on the user. In the essay, "Where Are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts" by Bruno Latour, he describes a case where the design of an artifact imposes on the user:

"[The door springs] simply slam the door shut. The interesting thing with such impolite doors is this: if they slam shut so violently, it means that you, the visitor, have to be very quick in passing through and that you should not be at someone else's heels, otherwise your nose will get shorter and bloody. An unskilled nonhuman groom thus presupposes a skilled human user." (Latour 157)

In the context of the research, platforms such as the website and projection for *Entitle*, and the website and mobile phone for the *Edmonton Art + Design* project are designed in certain ways on certain platforms, and therefore impose their ways of use on the user. "There already exists the start of a psychology of materials and of things, the study of affordances of objects. When used in this sense, the term *affordance* refers to the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could possibility be used" (Norman 9). The technologies themselves, such as mobile phones, web browsers, and computers, impose a paradigm on the user. In "The Morals of Modern Technology," George Grant states, "The phrase 'the computer does not impose' misleads because it abstracts the computer from the destiny that was required for its making. Common sense may tell us that the computer is an instrument, but it is an instrument from within the destiny that imposes itself upon us. Therefore the computer does impose" (Grant 49). In the area of visitor engagements in the museum, the platform or technology used affects the relationship between the visitor and the museum.

6.0 Conclusion

Interactive and personalized visitor engagements can create relevant connections and enhance independent experiences for museum visitors. The research indicated that a majority of visitors identified with the Independent visitor profile who prefer to experience museums in a self-directed manner. However, museums tended to offer visitor engagements that focus on museum professional-led experiences. This disconnect between visitor needs and museum offerings indicates that the Independent museum visitor does not always have access to self-directed visitor engagements, and so that connection may be weakened. By offering visitor engagements that serve the Independent visitor, the museum ensures a way to make that connection. These connections form the basis for deep, meaningful, and engaging relationships between museums, communities, and individuals.

Independent visitor engagements that are self-directed, customizable, and interactive can work to reinforce the relationship between the visitor and the museum. Self-directed visitor engagements allow visitors to experience the museum at their own pace. Customizable visitor engagements give visitor an opportunity for choice and the ability to focus on their interests. Interactive visitor engagements offer the visitor the opportunity to participate, creating a positive and memorable experience.

The audience for the museum is changing. They are empowered to communicate with and about the museum on their terms, through blogs and social media, and through the choices they make in experiencing the museum. Dialogue can take many forms and the museum needs to acknowledge that this dialogue may take place outside of their usual channels. Visitors and the community are realizing that they are empowered to create visitor engagements outside the authority of the museum, as a community-led view of the museum and as co-producers of meaning.

This research reveals an exciting opportunity for design. As an interdisciplinary field design is in a unique position to identify areas that can enhance museum and visitor relationships, helping to create stronger connections. Designers can take the lead in creating visitor engagements in an area they find needing enhancement, as a project engaged with museums, or in conjunction with the community. Museums can invite designers to participate in visitor engagement creation, offering the opportunity to identify problems proactively. The community can engage designers to create visitor engagements that meet their needs, whether or not the museum itself is involved.

This research benefits museums by demystifying how personalized engagements can be implemented and explicitly defines the awards acquired by visitors, particularly Independent visitors, who experience them. This research adds to the body of knowledge about museums and visitor interactions. By collecting data and interviews from museum professionals, this research presents real-world information about the goals of the museum in regards to engaging visitors. By collecting data from visitors, the audience is given a voice to express their preferences for visitor engagements.

Implementing visitor engagements that are self-directed, interactive, and customizable can create relevant connections and enhance independent experiences for museum visitors. In doing so, there is an opportunity to create rich, meaningful, engaging relationships between museums, communities, and individuals.

6.1 Future Research

This study defined a broad scope of research. Future research could be completed using this framework with larger data samples, including more extensive research on international museums and more in depth on visitor profiles. Research that specifically targets Independent visitors could reveal a better understanding of what this particular audience requires from visitor engagements. Further research into the design of visitor engagements for the Independent visitor could focus on how to enhance participation and dialogue, and emphasize visitors' production of meaning through their subjectivity. The audience itself can be a platform for creating Independent visitor engagements.

The museum landscape is changing, with audiences empowered to communicate with and about the museum on their terms. Research could investigate what is ahead for communication, focusing on social media and mobile technologies. Modes of communication are changing rapidly and the future of those communications may look incredibly different in a few years' time. Further explorations into the area of technology in the museum would be highly valued.

Visitor engagements that utilize crowdsourcing and co-production offer an interesting area of study. These projects could be created outside the authority of the museum, with a study into the concept of authority, authorship, and how the museum or visitor mediates information. Visitor engagements have a degree of self-censorship, by the museum attempting to avoid controversy with a particular audience, or by the visitor carefully choosing what they present when participating in an interactive context.

Future research could focus on one particular area, such as enhancing relationships with public art through visitor engagements. Public art offers the distinct opportunity to work with a space that is constantly in flux. The city is constantly changing and offering contextual information can be challenging. This change in the city over time is a form of dialogue, a dialogue that exposes, for example, what is happening in a particular neighbourhood. How does a public art installation affect a community? How does a change in the community affect the reading of a public art installation? The construction or relocation of a museum within a community also offers an opportunity for researching how the museum affects a neighbourhood, and the city itself. Research could be completed on a particular institution, its connections to its audiences, and its affect on the cityscape.

Edmonton has seen several changes to its cultural institutions, such as the new Art Gallery of Alberta building and mandate. Further research could be completed to study the local museums ecosystem, the affect of changes on the community, and how to enhance experience for museum professionals, artifact producers, and audiences.

7.0 *Garden of Muses* Exhibition



7.0.1 *Garden of Muses* opening wall

The *Garden of Muses* exhibition was displayed in FAB Gallery, Edmonton, Canada from October 4 to 29, 2011. Over 1000 people viewed the exhibition and approximately 250 people attended the reception on October 6, 2011.



7.0.2 Overview of the first wall

This document was the basis for the didactic information presented in the exhibition. The exhibition was divided into six sections to work within the space of the gallery. The information was organized with the gallery audience in mind, with each section

A collection of approximately 20 colorful sticky notes scattered on a light blue background. The notes are various colors (yellow, pink, blue, purple) and contain handwritten text in different languages or scripts, including English, Hindi, and possibly others. Some notes have drawings like smiley faces.

Presenting my research in a new form and space allowed for reflection in regards to my study and application of my work in creating interactive components for the exhibition. One challenge was to distill the research from a lengthy document into its fundamental elements to make the information manageable for a gallery visitor. The

language of the text shifted to a more informal tone to create a conversational quality. The interactive components were used to punctuate the information delivered in the panels and offer a break from reading for the visitor. The interactive components allowed my to apply my knowledge of visitor engagements in a practical manner and to gather more research.



7.0.5 *Entitle*, reconfigured for the exhibition



7.0.6 Public art and design, information as documented in the workshop



7.0.7 Interactive component asking visitors to comment on the exhibition

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Appendix

Appendix A: Surveys

Appendix B: Interviews

Appendix C: Workshops

Appendix D: Artifacts

Appendix A: Surveys

Recruitment Letters

Consent Form

Test Materials

Results

Recruitment: Museum Professionals

Hello,

I am a Master of Design student and I am interested in collecting information about how you use visitor engagements through an email survey. The information from this survey will be coded to be anonymous.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

The survey takes 15 minutes to complete. The survey is below.

The results of this survey will be coded to be anonymous. Included with this email is an informed consent letter. I will understand your response to this survey as an acceptance of the letter of consent. Data collected in this study will be handled in compliance with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants,

If you have any questions, you can reach me at:

Principal Investigator
Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate
Visual Communication Design, Art and Design
3-71 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta
Phone: 780 707-7259
Email: cindy.couldwell@ualberta.ca

Supervisor
Aidan Rowe
Visual Communication Design, Art and Design
3-77 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta
Phone: 780 492-8591
Email: aidan.rowe@ualberta.ca

Recruitment: Visitors

Hello,

I am a Master of Design student and I am interested in collecting information about visitor engagements through an online survey. The survey is anonymous.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

The survey takes 15 minutes to complete. Here is a link: [URL to survey](#).

This survey is anonymous. By completing the survey you give consent that the data may be used in research. Data collected in this study will be handled in compliance with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants.

If you have any questions, you can reach me at:

Principal Investigator

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Recruitment: Students on International Field Trips

Hello [Instructor Name],

I am a Master of Design student and I am interested in collecting information about field trips to international cultural institutions, such as museums or galleries, that students may take. I am interested in collecting information about visitor engagements through two online surveys. The first survey will be administered before field trip and the second survey will be administered after the field trip. The surveys are anonymous.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

Are you planning a field trip this Winter 2011 term? If so, would you be willing to pass along a link to the online survey to your students?

The surveys take 15 minutes to complete. Here is a link to the first survey: [URL to survey](#). I will send the link to the second survey after the trip.

This survey is anonymous. By completing the survey your students give consent that the data may be used in research. Data collected in this study will be handled in compliance with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants.

If you accept, please pass along this information with the survey URL, via email, to your students. If you'd like further explanation, we can make an appointment or I can come to your class to discuss my research.

If you have any questions, you can reach me at:

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Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate, Visual Communication Design, Department of Art and Design, University of Alberta.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

Your role is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements.

The survey is approximately 12 questions long. The results of the survey will be coded to be anonymous. If the information collected is quoted or utilized in an MDes thesis report your anonymity will be maintained.

Your confidentiality and rights

The research with this project complies with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants. Data recorded in the course of this research will be available only to myself and my supervisor. This study has been approved by the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board.

I, (please print your name) _____ acknowledge, understand, and agree to all of the following:

- I have been invited to participate in this research study.
- My participation in this study is voluntary.
- I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time with out penalty. If I choose not to participate the data collected will not be utilized.
- I have the right to my privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. My name and personal information will not appear on any materials.
- I have the right to request some or all materials released to this study be removed. The deadline to make a request to remove materials is June 30, 2011.
- All of the personal information collected here will remain confidential. Any personal identifiers will be destroyed once the thesis is published.
- I may be quoted directly in an MDes thesis, and possibly in related papers and presentations, but my anonymity will be maintained.
- Any data collected in this study will be stored in a safe and secure place.

Signature of participant _____

Date _____

If you have any questions with regards to this research project, please contact:

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Museums and Galleries: A Survey for Professionals

Hello, I am a Master of Design student at the University of Alberta and I am interested in collecting information about how your organization uses visitor engagements through this online survey.

Visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs). Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information.

Your role is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements at your institution. This survey is voluntary. All the data is being collected anonymously. Completion of this survey will take approximately 10 minutes.

The objective of this research is for a thesis for a Master of Design. All the reports will include only anonymous results. Please do not provide your name anywhere or provide information that could possibly identify individuals by name. Only aggregate quantitative data will be reported. Any potentially identifying information from any quotes included in reporting results will be removed from open-ended responses prior to being reported.

This study has been approved by the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board.

If you have any questions with regards to this research project, please contact:

Cindy Couldwell

Visual Communication Design, Art and Design

3-71 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta

Email: cindy.couldwell@ualberta.ca

Continuing with this survey implies your consent to participate.

1. What is your organization type?

- ☐ Art museum or gallery
- ☐ Science or technology museum, observatory
- ☐ History museum, historic house or heritage museum
- ☐ Aquarium/zoo (nature centre/park/botanical gardens)
- ☐ Humanitarian or human-rights museum
- ☐ Children's museum
- ☐ Small community-run center for arts or museums

☐ Landmark/memorial

☐ Other:

2. What is your position within your organization?

3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Not offered
Tour led by a museum professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio tour on a device or podcast downloaded to mobile device	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-guided tour with printed map/instructions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Printed visitor guides or pamphlets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information panels next to the exhibit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Touch screens or kiosks with interpretive information/activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activities with mobile devices or apps for smartphones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media e.g. facebook, twitter, flickr, delicious, youtube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tagging items (e.g. online or through texting)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interacting with hands-on exhibits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in a story wall or tree (e.g. visitors can add a story)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Voting on artwork or exhibits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lectures or talks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing of videos, films or documentaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Not offered
Classes or craft days	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing a catalogue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing souvenirs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late-night party events or performances/concert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Survey about exhibit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

List any other visitor engagements you have used:


4. What is the primary purpose of the visitor engagements?

- ☐ Enhance learning
- ☐ Encourage visitors to participate
- ☐ Create dialogue
- ☐ Additional source of contextual and interpretive information
- ☐ Allow visitors to have a social experience with others
- ☐ Entertain visitors
- ☐ Other:

**5. Do you find any of the visitor engagements listed above enhance your visitors' experiences?
How do they benefit visitors?**

6. Were there any visitor engagements that were interactive or customizable? Were there opportunities for visitors to participate? Please describe.

7. What constraints prevent you from creating or enhancing visitor engagements?



8. What is the title of the position for the person/people in your organization who create visitor engagements?

9. What is your organization's approximate annual budget?


10. How many full-time paid staff do you have? How many part-time paid staff do you have?



11. Approximately how many visitors does your organization have per year?

12. What is the size of your collection (if you have a collection)?

13. Additional comments:



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Museums and Galleries: Survey for Visitors

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

Your role is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements. This survey is voluntary. All the data is being collected anonymously. Completion of this survey will take approximately 10 minutes.

All the reports will include only anonymous results. Please do not provide your name anywhere or provide information that could possibly identify individuals by name, title or responsibility. Only aggregate quantitative data will be reported. Any potentially identifying information from any quotes included in reporting results will be removed from open-ended responses prior to being reported.

This study has been approved by the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board.

If you have any questions with regards to this research project, please contact:
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Email: cindy.couldwell@ualberta.ca

Continuing with this survey implies your consent to participate.

1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries?

	Enjoy	Neutral	Do not enjoy	Never visited
Art museum or gallery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Science or natural history museum, observatory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
History museum, historic house or heritage museum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aquarium or zoo (nature centre, park, botanical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Enjoy	Neutral	Do not enjoy	Never visited
gardens)				
Humanitarian or human-rights museum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children's museum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small community-run center for arts or museums	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landmark or memorial	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Thinking about your last visit to a museum or gallery, what interested you when visiting?

	Interested	Neutral	Not interested
Content of the museum or gallery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific exhibit/show	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific object	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program or event (e.g. craft day, lecture, tour)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Thinking of the last year, when you went to a museum or gallery how important was the expectation you would do the following?

	Important	Neutral	Not important
Learn something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have an interesting experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be entertained	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have a social experience with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in an activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements?

	Often	Sometimes	Never tried	Not offered/don't know if it was offered
Tour led by a museum professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio tour from museum or podcast downloaded to mobile device	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Often	Sometimes	Never tried	Not offered/don't know if it was offered
Self-guided tour with printed map/instructions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience exhibits on your own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Printed visitor guides or pamphlets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information panels next to the exhibit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Touch screens or kiosks with interpretive information/activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activities for mobile devices or apps for smartphones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media e.g. facebook, twitter, flickr, delicious, youtube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tagging items (e.g. online or through texting)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interacting with hands-on exhibits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in a story wall (e.g. adding your story)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Voting on artwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lectures and artist talks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Videos, films or documentaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classes or craft days	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing a catalogue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing souvenirs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late-night party events or performances/concert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Survey about exhibit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

List any other visitor engagements you have used:

5. If you did partake of any visitor engagements, what motivated you to do so? If you did not, why not?

6. Are there any visitor engagements that stand out as being particularly good or enhanced your experience? If so, please describe.

7. Were there any visitor engagements that were interactive or customizable? Was there an opportunity to participate? Please describe.

8. Did you participate? Why or why not?

9. How often do you visit museums or galleries per year?

- ☐ Once
- ☐ 2 - 5 times
- ☐ 6 - 10 times
- ☐ More than 10 times

10. Would you describe yourself as any of the following types of visitor?

These categories are provided by Ignite the Power of Art by Bonnie Pitman and Ellen Hirzy.

- ☐ Observer - prefers a guided experience and straightforward explanations
- ☐ Participant - has interest in connecting with the exhibits and the social experience of being at the museum or gallery
- ☐ Independent - prefers to view exhibits independently, without explanations or interpretation
- ☐ Enthusiast - actively participates in a wide variety of museum programming
- ☐ Other: _____

11. What is your age group?

- ☐ 18 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 30
- ☐ 31 - 40
- ☐ 41 - 50
- ☐ 51+

12. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

13. Additional comments:

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Museums and Galleries: Survey for International Field Trips

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

Your role is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements. This survey is voluntary. All the data is being collected anonymously. Completion of this survey will take approximately 10 minutes.

All the reports will include only anonymous results. Please do not provide your name anywhere or provide information that could possibly identify individuals by name, title or responsibility. Only aggregate quantitative data will be reported. Any potentially identifying information from any quotes included in reporting results will be removed from open-ended responses prior to being reported.

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Email: cindy.couldwell@ualberta.ca

Continuing with this survey implies your consent to participate.

1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries?

	Enjoy	Neutral	Do not enjoy	Never visited
Art museum or gallery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Science or natural history museum, observatory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
History museum, historic house or heritage museum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aquarium or zoo (nature centre, park, botanical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Enjoy	Neutral	Do not enjoy	Never visited
gardens)				
Humanitarian or human-rights museum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children's museum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small community-run center for arts or museums	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landmark or memorial	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. List three museums or galleries you visited on your field trip.

3. Thinking about one of your visits to a museum or gallery on your trip, what interested you when visiting?

	Interested	Neutral	Not interested
Content of the museum or gallery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific exhibit/show	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific object	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program or event (e.g. craft day, lecture, tour)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. When you visited museums or galleries on your trip, how important was the expectation you would do the following?

	Important	Neutral	Not important
Learn something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have an interesting experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be entertained	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have a social experience with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in an activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements?

Often Sometimes Never tried Not

				offered/don't know if it was offered
Tour led by a museum professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio tour from museum or podcast downloaded to mobile device	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-guided tour with printed map/instructions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience exhibits on your own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Printed visitor guides or pamphlets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information panels next to the exhibit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Touch screens or kiosks with interpretive information/activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activities for mobile devices or apps for smartphones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media e.g. facebook, twitter, flickr, delicious, youtube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tagging items (e.g. online or through texting)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interacting with hands-on exhibits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in a story wall (e.g. adding your story)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Voting on artwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lectures and artist talks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Videos, films or documentaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classes or craft days	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing a catalogue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing souvenirs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Late-night party events or performances/concert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Survey about exhibit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

List any other visitor engagements you used:

6. If you did partake of any visitor engagements, what motivated you to do so? If you did not, why not?

7. Were there any visitor engagements that stand out as being particularly good or enhanced your experience? If so, please describe.

8. Were there any visitor engagements that were interactive or customizable? Was there an opportunity to participate? Please describe.

9. Did you participate? Why or why not?

10. How often do you visit museums or galleries per year?

- ☐ Once
- ☐ 2 - 5 times
- ☐ 6 - 10 times
- ☐ More than 10 times

11. Would you describe yourself as any of the following types of visitor?

These categories are provided by Ignite the Power of Art by Bonnie Pitman and Ellen Hirzy.

- ☐ Observer - prefers a guided experience and straightforward explanations
- ☐ Participant - has interest in connecting with the exhibits and the social experience of being at the museum or gallery
- ☐ Independent - prefers to view exhibits independently, without explanations or interpretation
- ☐ Enthusiast - actively participates in a wide variety of museum programming
- ☐ Other:

12. What is your age group?

- ☐ 18 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 30
- ☐ 31 - 40
- ☐ 41 - 50
- ☐ 51+

13. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

14. Additional comments:

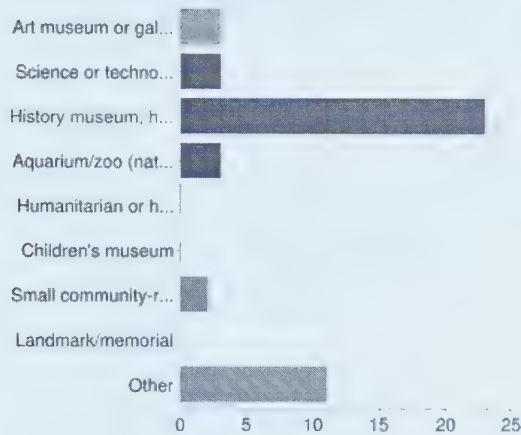
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45 responses

Summary [See complete responses](#)

1. What is your organization type?

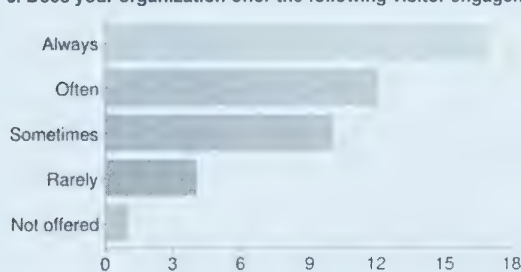


Art museum or gallery	3	7%
Science or technology museum, observatory	3	7%
History museum, historic house or heritage museum	23	51%
Aquarium/zoo (nature centre/park/botanical gardens)	3	7%
Humanitarian or human-rights museum	0	0%
Children's museum	0	0%
Small community-run center for arts or museums	2	4%
Landmark/memorial	0	0%
Other	11	24%

2. What is your position within your organization?

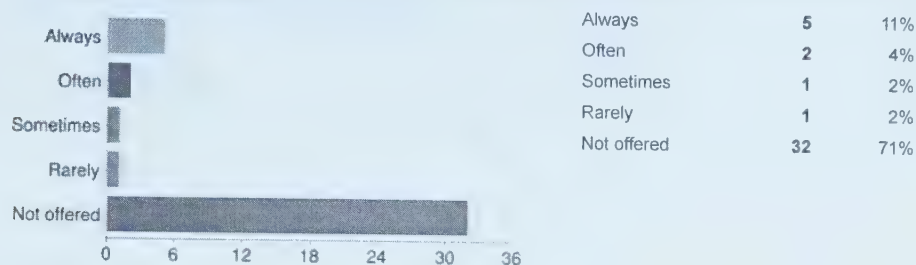
Manager, Visitor Services education specialist curator Exec Director Founder Executive Director Lead
Interpreter Managing Director Curator Executive Director coordinator/director Museum Educator Programs Coordi ...

3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Tour led by a museum professional

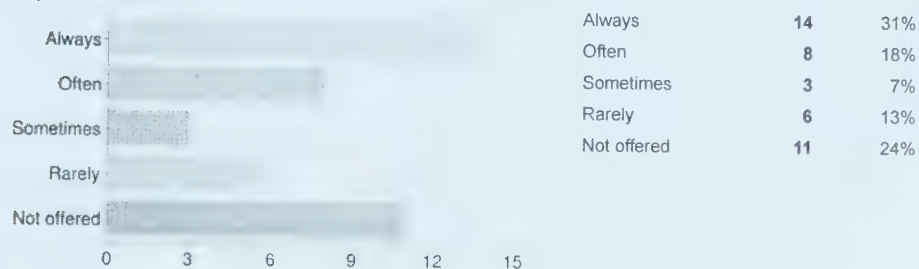


Always	17	38%
Often	12	27%
Sometimes	10	22%
Rarely	4	9%
Not offered	1	2%

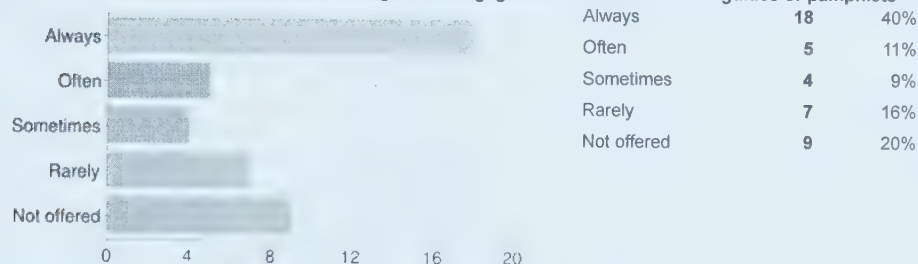
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Audio tour on a device or podcast downloaded to mobile device



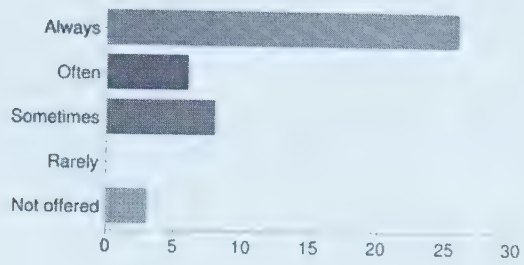
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Self-guided tour with printed map/instructions



3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Printed visitor guides or pamphlets

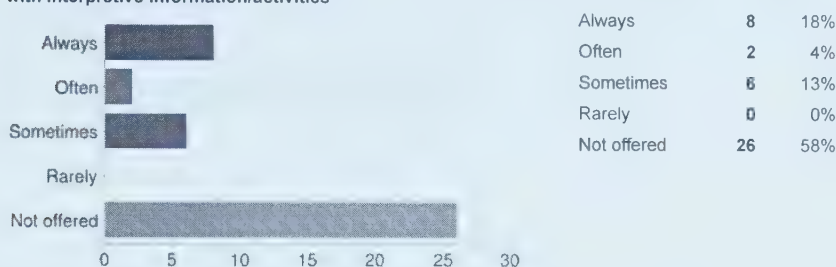


3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Information panels next to the exhibit



Always	26	58%
Often	6	13%
Sometimes	8	18%
Rarely	0	0%
Not offered	3	7%

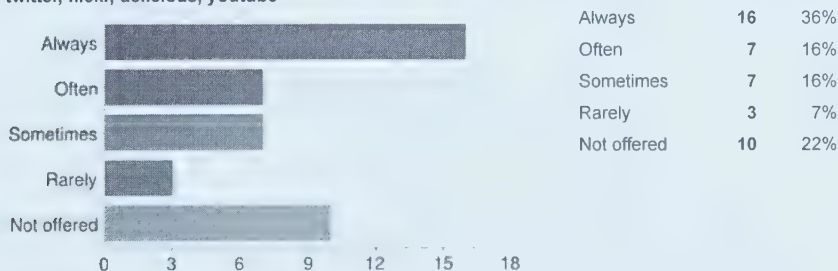
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Touch screens or kiosks with interpretive information/activities



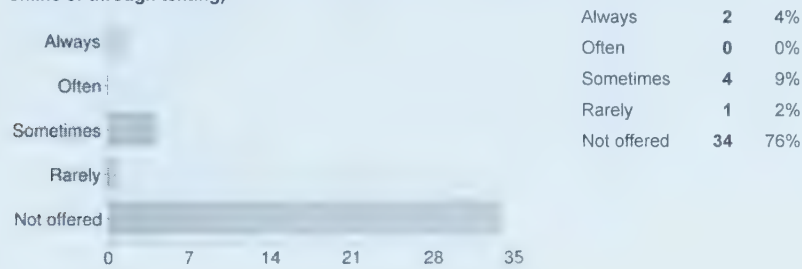
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Activities with mobile devices or apps for smartphones



3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Social media e.g. facebook, twitter, flickr, delicious, youtube



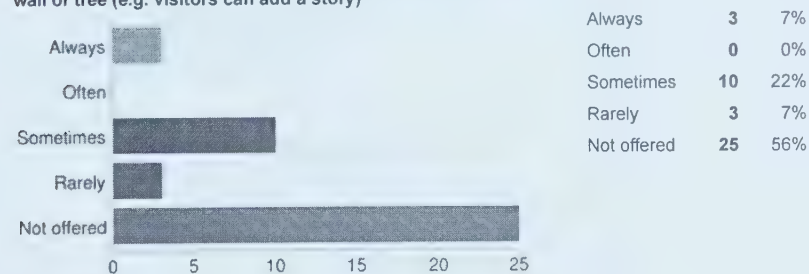
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Tagging items (e.g. online or through texting)



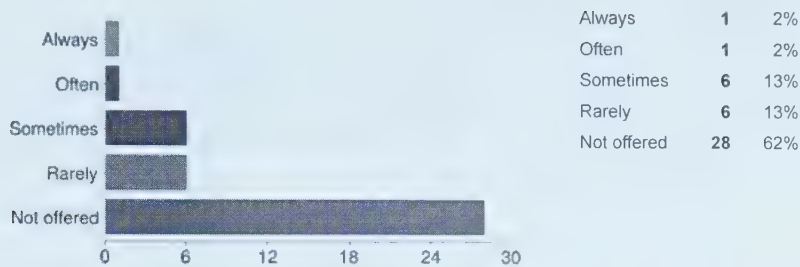
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Interacting with hands-on exhibits



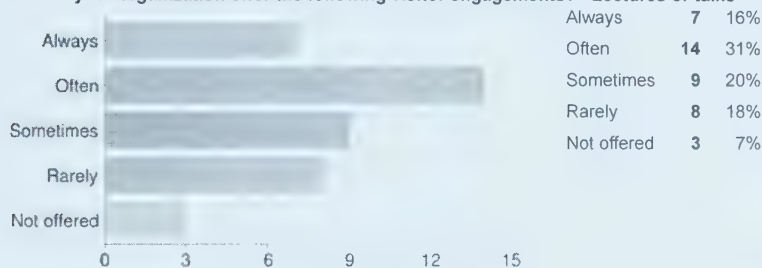
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Participating in a story wall or tree (e.g. visitors can add a story)



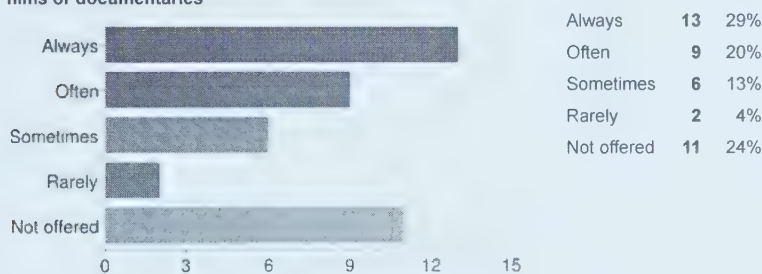
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Voting on artwork or exhibits



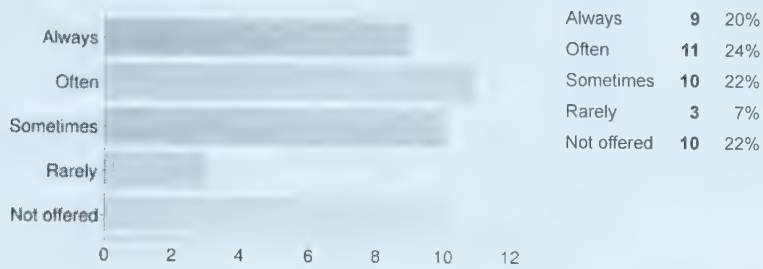
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Lectures or talks

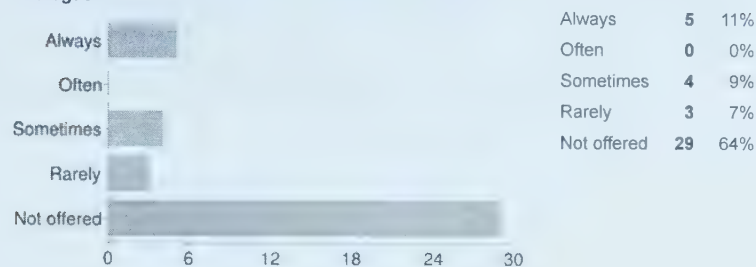
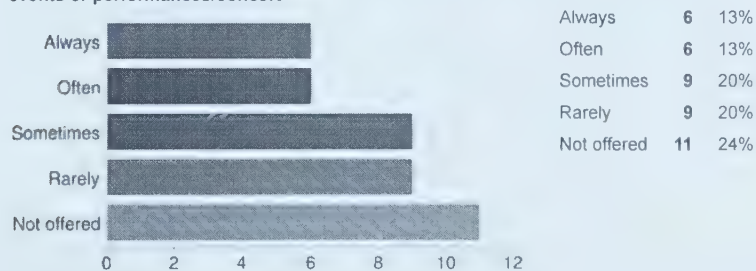


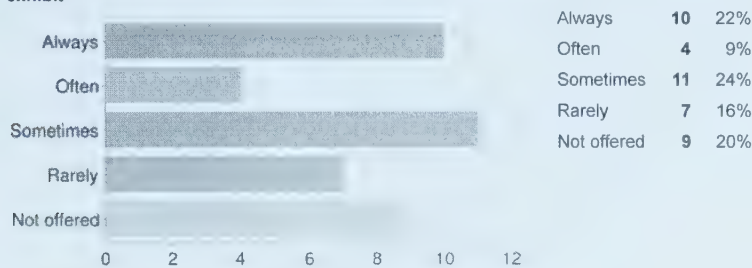
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Viewing of videos, films or documentaries



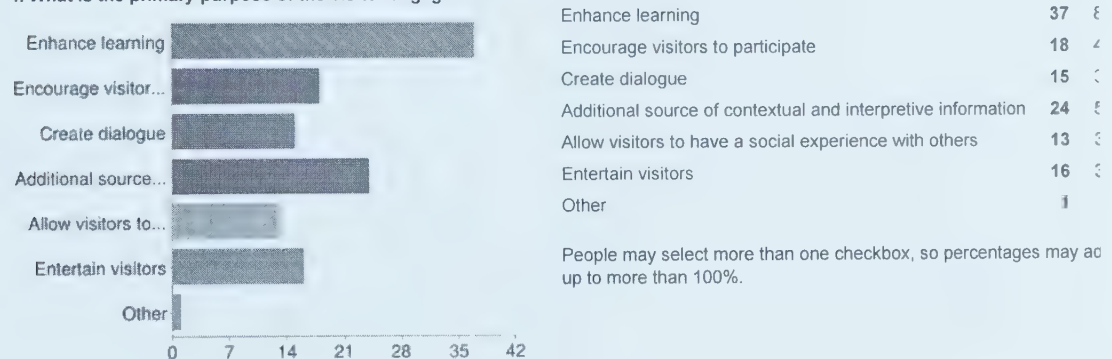
3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Classes or craft days



3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Purchasing a catalogue**3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Purchasing souvenirs****3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Late-night party events or performances/concert**

3. Does your organization offer the following visitor engagements? - Survey about exhibit**List any other visitor engagements you have used:**

School programs daily include interactive activities (checked off "Classes or craft days" although the category doesn't exactly fit. We are currently developing a new interactive visitor centre which will address several of the items above as well. Tours, lectures, special events, regularly scheduled educational programs Encourage to sign and comment in guest book press conferences, School Programs in May and June for K-5, and Day Camps for children aged 5-11 in July and August. These programs are our main interpretive experience. Tours are led by volunteer interpreters and summer interpretiv ...

4. What is the primary purpose of the visitor engagements?

People may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

5. Do you find any of the visitor engagements listed above enhance your visitors' experiences? How do they benefit visitors?

Visitors are pleased to discover that this building belongs to the citizens and that they have a place here. They also appreciate learning the extent to which citizens can participate in our democracy. International visitors sometimes find it surprising they we are so open with our democratic institutions. Tour is vital because we are interpreting big hunks of metal that are kept in cold places. A tour is necessary to provide context and connections for the visitors. We provide different forms of engagements as there are

many different types of visitors.
group ...

The tours are in extremely small

6. Were there any visitor engagements that were interactive or customizable? Were there opportunities for visitors to participate? Please describe.

We offer specialized programming for students, one of which is a weeklong program here at the Legislature (part of "Inquiring Minds"). We also customize tours for English language learners, and we offer all of our programming in French as well. Touch screen views of the night sky Yes - hands on activities such as sand boxes, puzzles etc special events encourage children, families and others to come and learn about western history, about life in the 1860s and to learn more about their heritage we have several interactive sports games and hand games that demonstrate different sports and first nat ...

7. What constraints prevent you from creating or enhancing visitor engagements?

This is a working building. When the Legislature is in session we sometimes have to restrict access to certain areas of the building, although we try to minimize this. However there are some security issues at times. time and money Time and money and lack of staff. Funding Time, money -- it is something that we try for as much as we can, & new programs & exhibits incorporate it as much as practical. Over the next few years, we will be re-doing our entire interpretive master plan for the city & expect to incorporate even more "visitor engagements" into the programming & exhibits, including mor ...

8. What is the title of the position for the person/people in your organization who create visitor engagements?

Educational Programs Coordinator and Guide Coordinator Educational specialist No specific person. Founder Programs Coordinator Visitor Services Curator. Interpretive Program Coordinator (6 month position) coordinator, display artist, technician, program leader, special projects coordinator and volunteer This is the responsibility of many of our staff -- and we would benefit by having these various staff and departments working more closely together. Education, Programming, Museum Store, Front Desk, Marketing/Communications, Exhibits Programs Coordinator. I am a staff of 1. Director of the Center for Cr ...

9. What is your organization's approximate annual budget?

\$2000000 ? All overhead is covered by a private company. That cost, if we had to pay it, would be over \$10,000/year 800000 450000 \$50 000. 200000 \$350000 1 million \$22000 \$19 M \$150000 \$300000 1.1 million 1.1 million 410000 P300,000.00 (\$42,857.14) less that 1000 dollars R220 000 - most of which is fundraised by the staff and the Friends of the Museum. Uganda shillings 3millions Total budget, including staff salaries - US Dollar 40 000 about 35 million kenya shilling, cant be sure \$100,000 - 250,000 R800 000 subsidy from Eastern Cape Government;

other monies from visitor fees, consultancies, etc minimal. We a ...

10. How many full-time paid staff do you have? How many part-time paid staff do you have?

9 FT and 16 PT one part time Nine full time. Others are casual. zero paid - one volunteer - the founder 4 f-t, 15 p-t. (10 full-time-equivalent in total) 4 or 5 fulltime seasonal staff 4 FT 1 PT We have 2 (two) part time paid staff. 1 Executive Director, 1 6-month Program Coordinator, 5 full time summer interpreters 4 FTE and 4 P/T 12 full-time, 7 part-time 1 full-time. Summer staff - 5 Under 200 full time The educational program specialist is a full-time position shared equally between the museum and the art gallery. The museum specialist position is a 0.6 position. The museum is overseen by a fullti ...

11. Approximately how many visitors does your organization have per year?

150000 8000 ? 2000 75-85,000 4000 15000 9000 10000 30000 45000 1500 Approximately 471,000 3000 14800 approx. 100,000 approx. 100,000 12-15000 Between 15, 000 to 20, 000 people. Not sure About 30 - 38 000 per annum. 137 c. 4 000 200,000 visitors 1877 as at Dec, 2010 10 000 (History Museum - part of Albany Museum complex) Our venue has c. 9,000 per annum 330-350,000 30,000 visitors (estimated) 50000 1500 150000 Averages 3,000 4000 500 + Less than 500. 75000 15,000 -20,000 50K+ Number unavailable at this time. 30000

12. What is the size of your collection (if you have a collection)?

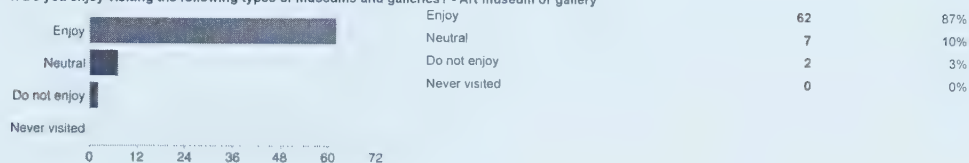
N/A Not sure of the size we are in the process of inventory My collection - 20,000. 3000+ pieces plus 2,000 books and reference material no collection of artifacts. Many interpretive items - a "study collection" if you want to think in museum-speak - all of which are consumable/disposable. Includes biofacts (stuffed critters, shells, skins), mineral specimens, etc. some religious artifacts; tabernacle, chalice, monstrance, other paraphernalia related to Mass. Also some furs, metis sashes. extremely small collection 7000 Approximately 25 000 artefacts. 3,000 artifacts We have an education (working) c ...

13. Additional comments:

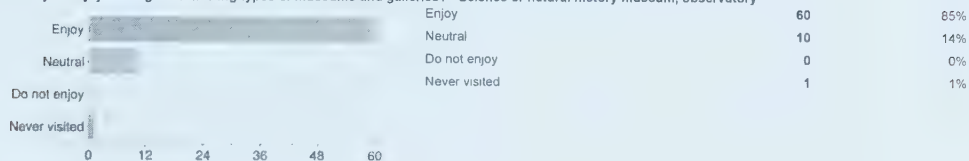
Good luck with the project This is a private museum of a private collection with a value of over \$1,000,000. The collection will eventually be given to a public agency. Not sure what some of your questions mean. Contact me [REDACTED] or our Programs Coordinator [REDACTED] if you want to chat & get more details on the areas I've left blank [REDACTED] "Social interactions" between visitors? Several programs enable that. Some things in the Discovery Room enable that too, but primarily between family members. Good Luck on your thesis. Lack of consistency is a

71 responses**Summary** [See complete responses](#)

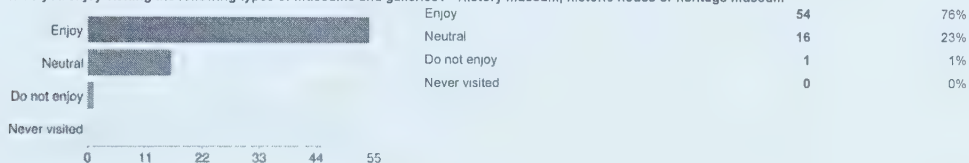
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Art museum or gallery



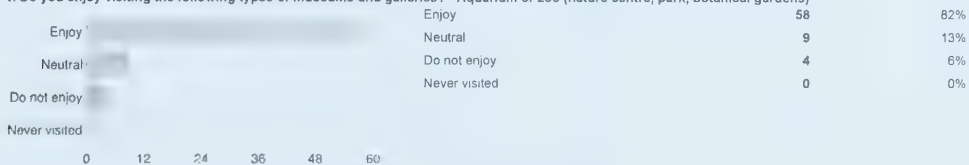
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Science or natural history museum, observatory



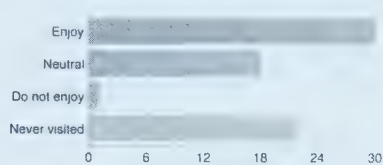
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - History museum, historic house or heritage museum



1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Aquarium or zoo (nature centre, park, botanical gardens)

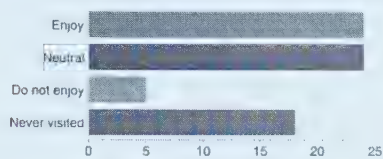


1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Humanitarian or human-rights museum



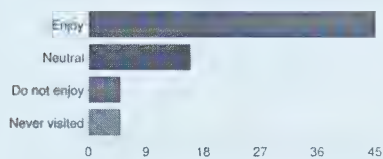
Enjoy	30	42%
Neutral	18	25%
Do not enjoy	1	1%
Never visited	22	31%

1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Children's museum



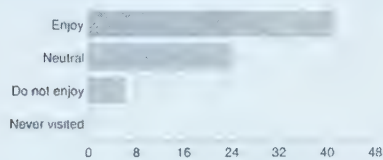
Enjoy	24	34%
Neutral	24	34%
Do not enjoy	5	7%
Never visited	18	25%

1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Small community-run center for arts or museums



Enjoy	45	63%
Neutral	16	23%
Do not enjoy	5	7%
Never visited	5	7%

1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Landmark or memorial



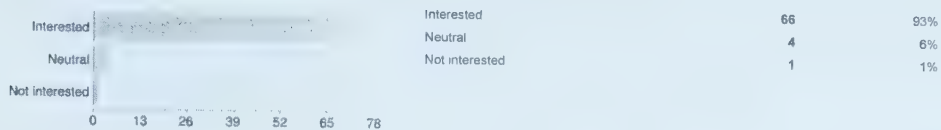
Enjoy	41	58%
Neutral	24	34%
Do not enjoy	6	8%
Never visited	0	0%

2. Thinking about your last visit to a museum or gallery, what interested you when visiting? - Content of the museum or gallery

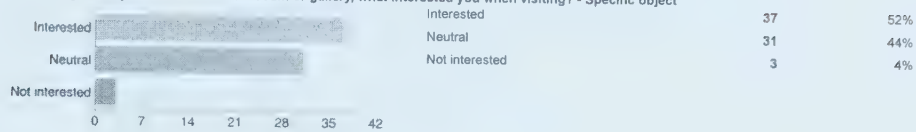


Interested	66	93%
Neutral	5	7%
Not interested	0	0%

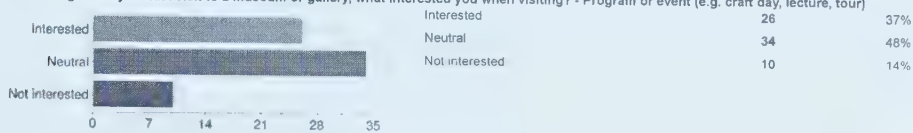
2. Thinking about your last visit to a museum or gallery, what interested you when visiting? - Specific exhibit/show



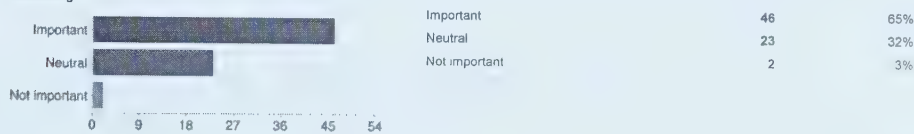
2. Thinking about your last visit to a museum or gallery, what interested you when visiting? - Specific object



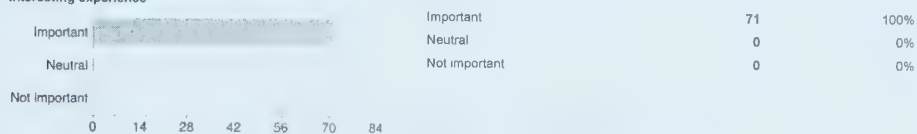
2. Thinking about your last visit to a museum or gallery, what interested you when visiting? - Program or event (e.g. craft day, lecture, tour)



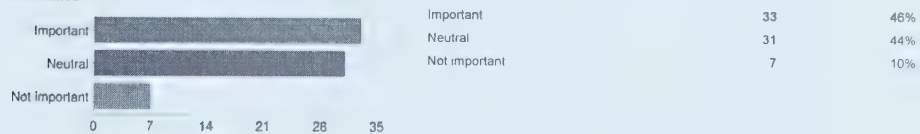
3. Thinking of the last year, when you went to a museum or gallery how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Learn something



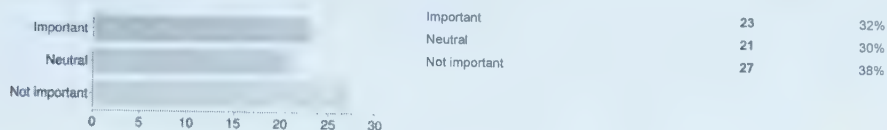
3. Thinking of the last year, when you went to a museum or gallery how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Have an interesting experience



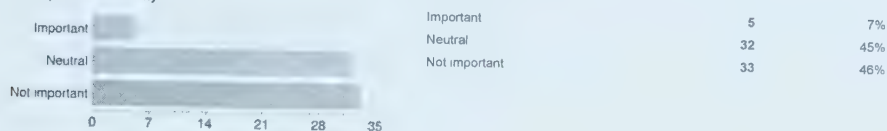
3. Thinking of the last year, when you went to a museum or gallery how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Be entertained



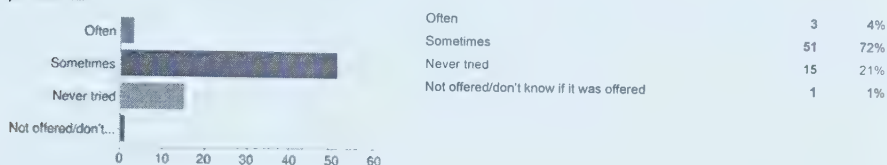
3. Thinking of the last year, when you went to a museum or gallery how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Have a social experience with others



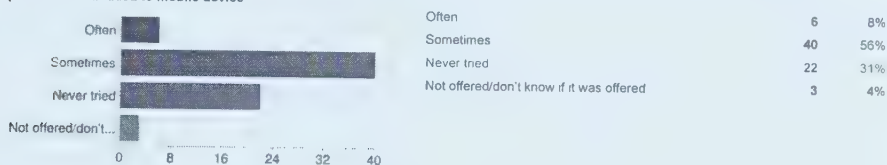
3. Thinking of the last year, when you went to a museum or gallery how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Participate in an activity



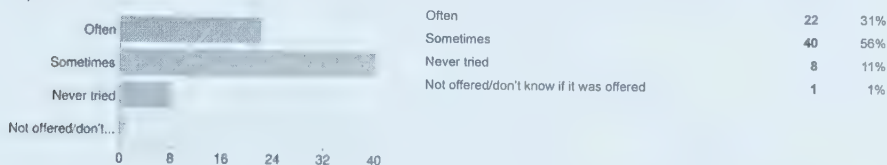
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Tour led by a museum professional



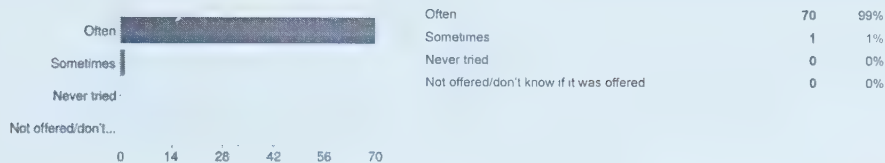
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Audio tour from museum or podcast downloaded to mobile device



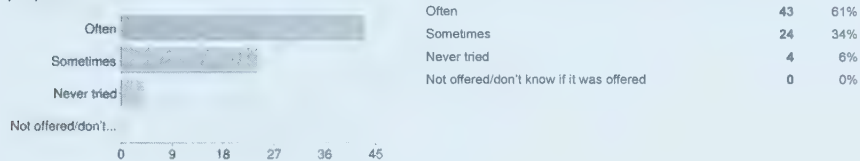
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Self-guided tour with printed map/instructions



4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Experience exhibits on your own



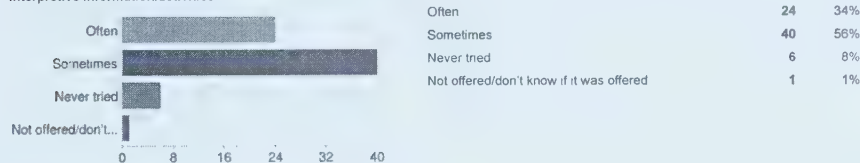
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Printed visitor guides or pamphlets



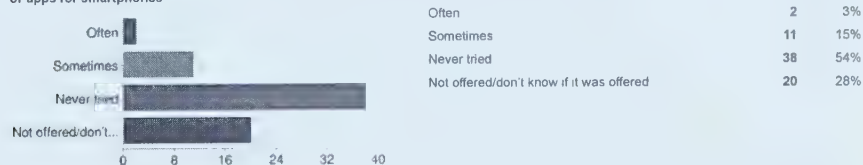
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Information panels next to the exhibit



4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Touch screens or kiosks with interpretive information/activities

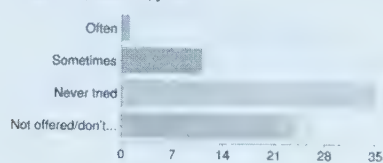


4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Activities for mobile devices or apps for smartphones



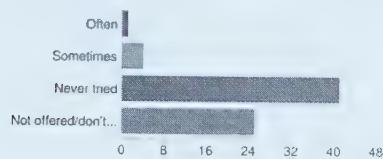
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Social media e.g. facebook,

twitter, flickr, delicious, youtube



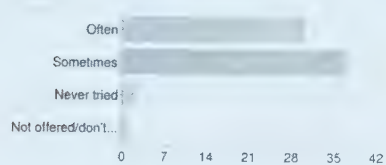
Often	1	1%
Sometimes	11	15%
Never tried	35	49%
Not offered/don't know if it was offered	24	34%

4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Tagging items (e.g. online or through texting)



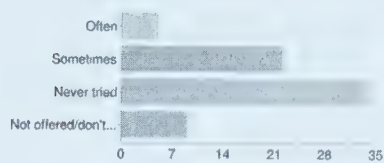
Often	1	1%
Sometimes	4	6%
Never tried	41	58%
Not offered/don't know if it was offered	25	35%

4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Interacting with hands-on exhibits



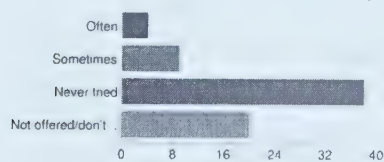
Often	30	42%
Sometimes	37	52%
Never tried	2	3%
Not offered/don't know if it was offered	1	1%

4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Participating in a story wall (e.g. adding your story)



Often	5	7%
Sometimes	22	31%
Never tried	34	48%
Not offered/don't know if it was offered	9	13%

4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Voting on artwork

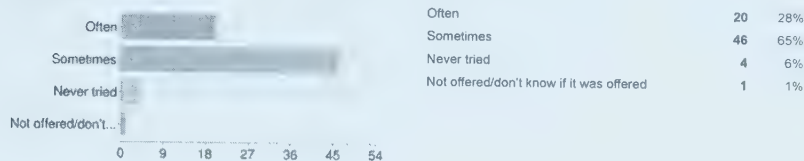


Often	4	6%
Sometimes	9	13%
Never tried	38	54%
Not offered/don't know if it was offered	20	28%

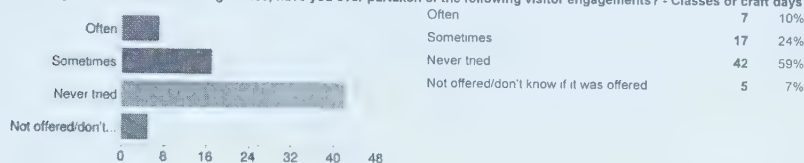
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Lectures and artist talks



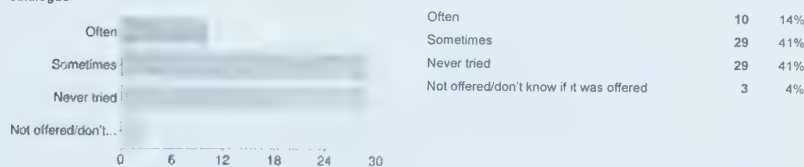
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Videos, films or documentaries



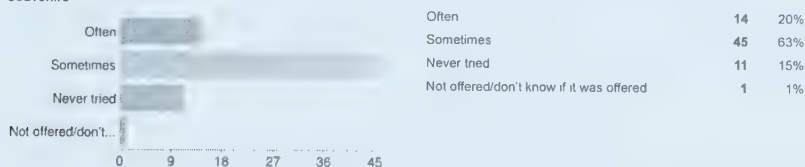
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Classes or craft days



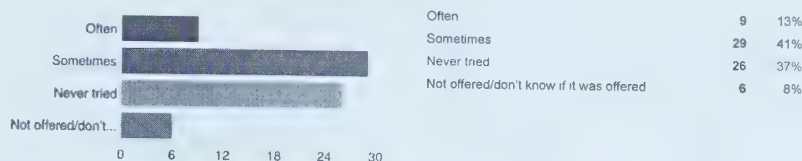
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Purchasing a catalogue



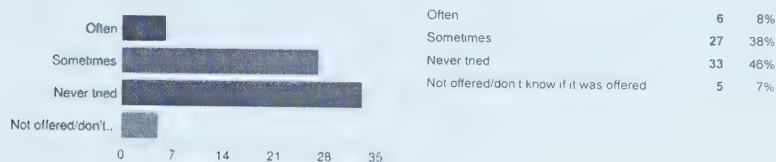
4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Purchasing souvenirs



4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Late-night party events or performances/concert



4. When you visited museums or galleries, have you ever partaken of the following visitor engagements? - Survey about exhibit



List any other visitor engagements you have used:

none Immersive experiences - where the gallery/museum tries to put you in the scene. For example, Under the Sea, where you watch a video while sitting in the replica of a sub, or space exploration where you are belted in, your seats rock and you watch a movie (of landing on a planet or exploring a planet). Demonstrations by museum staff followed by an opportunity for questions, discussion, demonstrations by community groups doing activities related to museum exhibits (on school March Break, designed for kids) n/a Live actors in historical roles Short film about Montreal architectural history at P

5. If you did partake of any visitor engagements, what motivated you to do so? If you did not, why not?

I knew the artist -To learn more about what I was looking at -To be more engaged in the experience -To feel like I was getting value for my visit (time and money) Don't recall ever seeing any advertised, unless they are fundraisers that cost a lot of money. I like to understand context, the personal history of an artist and how they developed their work. I don't read every display panel, but I always read the ones next to art I connect with. I want the added information Sometimes I just don't like people So I will shy away from engagements that require my active involvement. The opportunity to

6. Are there any visitor engagements that stand out as being particularly good or enhanced your experience? If so, please describe.

Loved visitor engagement at contemporary art gallery which used different learning styles for outreach materials: curated rap music to listen to while seeing art, math tours for people with learning skills in that area, touch panels, and didactic visual guides for visual learners. My brother an engineer loved the math tour materials. -I went on a walking tour in Berlin and had a very knowledgeable and entertaining tour guide show us a variety of memorials, sites, and points of interests. She gave us an introduction to many of the sites and encouraged us to further explore what she touched

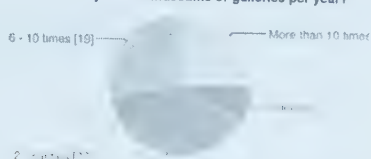
7. Were there any visitor engagements that were interactive or customizable? Was there an opportunity to participate? Please describe.

I enjoy the Edmonton Science Centre display that deals with the senses, etc. and let's you get right in there. Smelling different scents, playing on a giant tongue, I think there was something to do with balance or gravity too. -I also loved an exhibit at the Art Gallery of Alberta that had giant air filled figures that filled the tall rooms and I got to walk through and dodge the various figures. Very neat n/a Using a touchscreen that allowed you to 'flip' pages of an antique book, spring 2010 at the Art Gallery of Alberta. I think it was a book of Goya inscriptions and drawings. The

8. Did you participate? Why or why not?

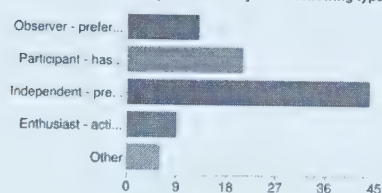
yes, because it was fun and I got to learn by doing, rather than just observing n/a I don't like to get trapped doing stuff when I want to look at stuff. I prefer to watch others than to participate myself. Yup. "Flipped" pages in the Goya book. always - I love the involvement n/a I sometimes will participate, so long as the crowds are not too long. I'd rather the exhibits focused more on the subject in terms of physical objects it's about instead of computer screens of information I can research myself I can't think of interactive exhibits, aside from children's museums, where I always particip

9. How often do you visit museums or galleries per year?



Once	6	8%
2 - 5 times	27	38%
6 - 10 times	19	27%
More than 10 times	18	25%

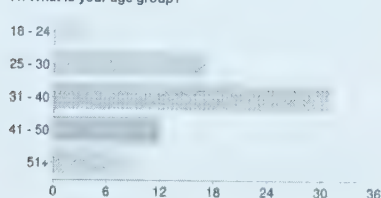
10. Would you describe yourself as any of the following types of visitor?



Observer - prefers a guided experience and straightforward explanations	1
Participant - has interest in connecting with the exhibits and the social experience of being at the museum or gallery	2
Independent - prefers to view exhibits independently, without explanations or interpretation	4
Enthusiast - actively participates in a wide variety of museum programming	4
Other	9

People may select more than one checkbox, so percentages may add up to more than 100%

11. What is your age group?



18 - 24	3	4%
25 - 30	17	24%
31 - 40	31	44%
41 - 50	12	17%
51+	8	11%

12. What is your gender?



Female	48	68%
Male	22	31%

13. Additional comments:

I don't tend to go as much as I would like in my own city, but I do purposefully seek out a learning or cultural experience when I travel and this often involves visiting a museum, art gallery, memorial, historical site, botanical gardens, castle/ fort/ palace, cemetery, artisan markets or other cultural events/ places.

Why was this grouped together, "Aquarium or zoo (nature centre, park, botanical gardens"? I can't stand zoos or aquariums but I love gardens and parks with out caged creatures.

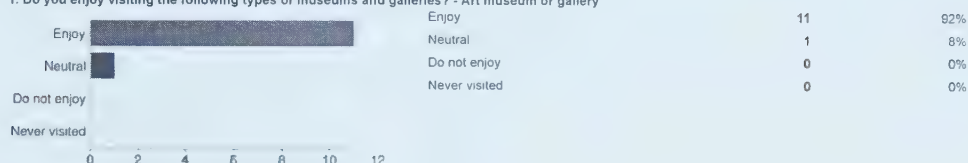
I hate being told I can't take photos when visiting art galleries or museums!!

I have a book call

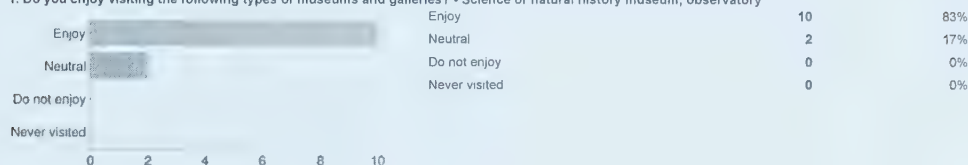
Number of daily responses

12 responses**Summary** [See complete responses](#)

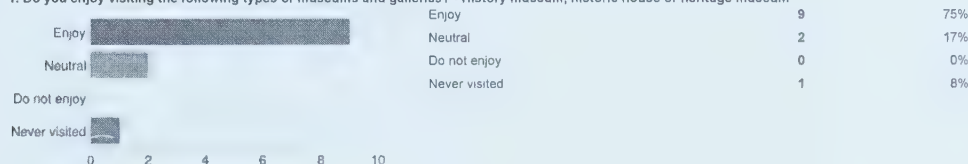
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Art museum or gallery



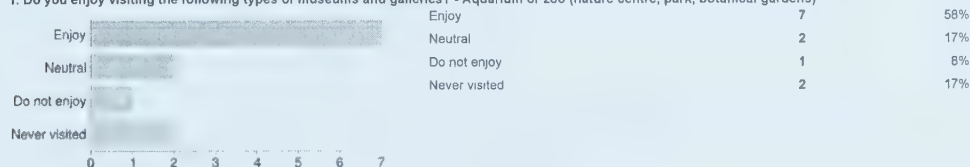
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Science or natural history museum, observatory



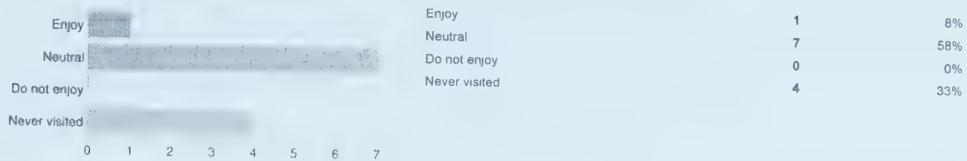
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - History museum, historic house or heritage museum



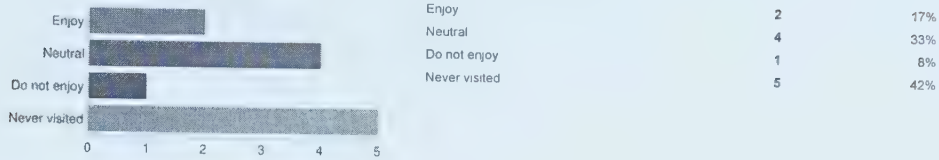
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Aquarium or zoo (nature centre, park, botanical gardens)



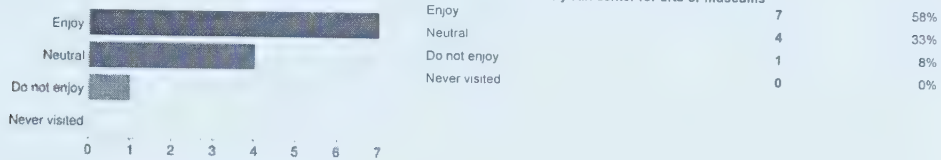
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Humanitarian or human-rights museum



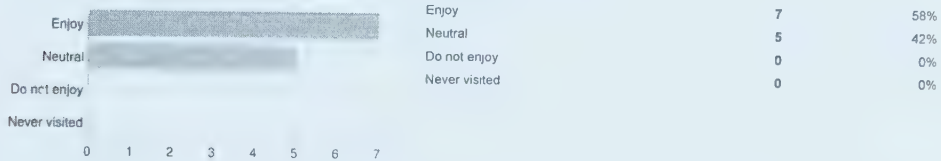
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Children's museum



1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Small community-run center for arts or museums



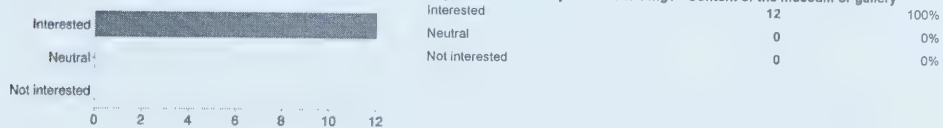
1. Do you enjoy visiting the following types of museums and galleries? - Landmark or memorial



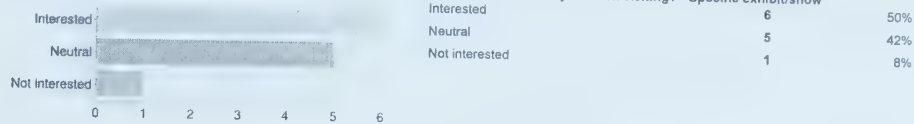
2. List three museums or galleries you visited on your field trip.

Guggenheim Museum, NY Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY Museum of Modern Art, NY Tate Design Museum Natural History Museum 1. Tate 2. National Portrait Gallery 3. Design Museum V&A Kemistry Gallery Design Museum Design Museum (london) Comic Strip Museum (Brussels) V&A (London) white cube gallery, design museum, and another small (independent i think) gallery that I can't remember the name of .. art MOMA, the met, whitney tate modern victoria albert museum Tate Natural History Design Museum V & A museum Tate modern Design museum Metropolitan Museum, Museum of Modern Art, Guggenheim

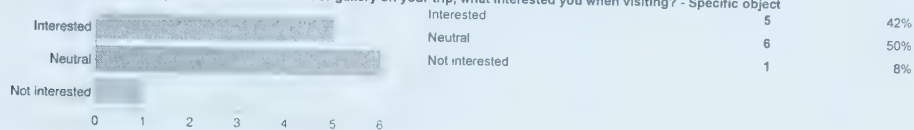
3. Thinking about one of your visits to a museum or gallery on your trip, what interested you when visiting? - Content of the museum or gallery



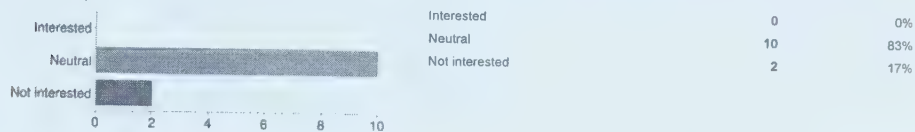
3. Thinking about one of your visits to a museum or gallery on your trip, what interested you when visiting? - Specific exhibit/show



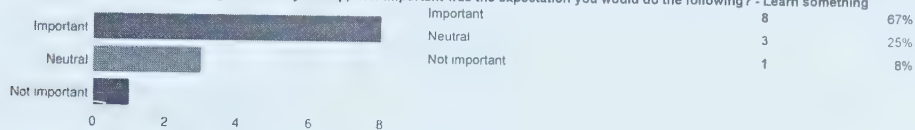
3. Thinking about one of your visits to a museum or gallery on your trip, what interested you when visiting? - Specific object



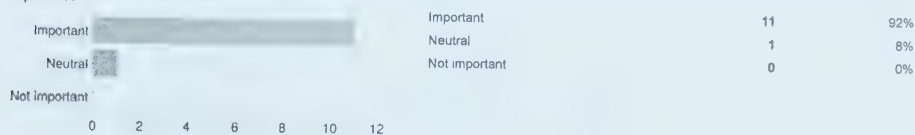
3. Thinking about one of your visits to a museum or gallery on your trip, what interested you when visiting? - Program or event (e.g. craft day, lecture, tour)



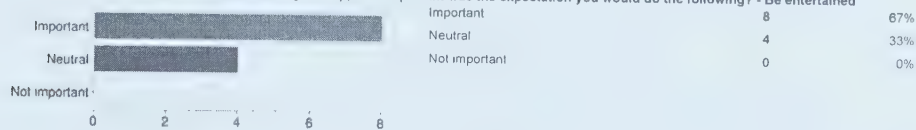
4. When you visited museums or galleries on your trip, how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Learn something



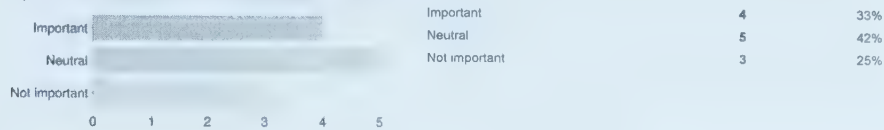
4. When you visited museums or galleries on your trip, how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Have an interesting experience



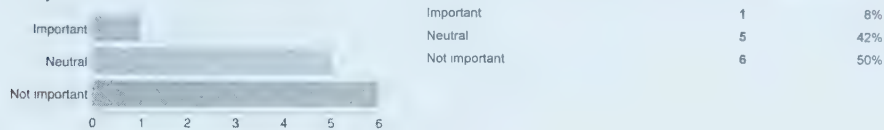
4. When you visited museums or galleries on your trip, how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Be entertained



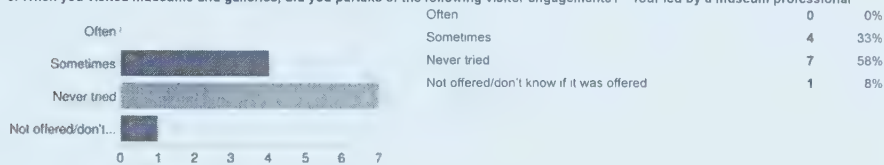
4. When you visited museums or galleries on your trip, how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Have a social experience with others



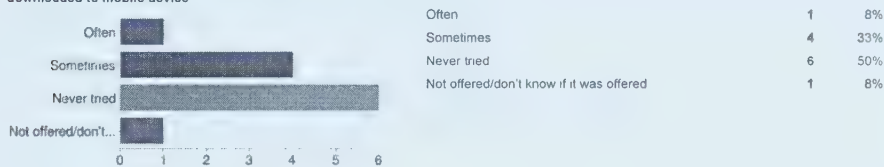
4. When you visited museums or galleries on your trip, how important was the expectation you would do the following? - Participate in an activity



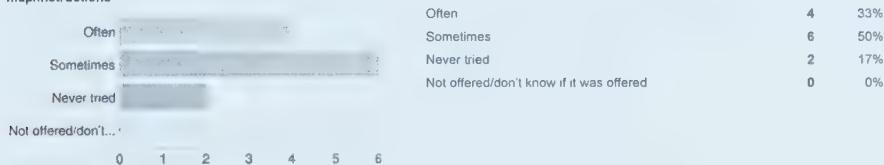
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Tour led by a museum professional



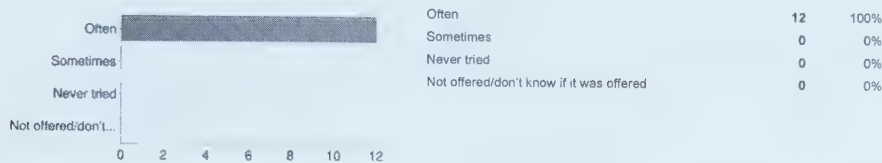
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Audio tour from museum or podcast downloaded to mobile device



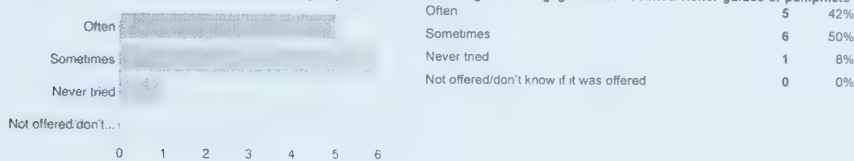
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Self-guided tour with printed map/instructions



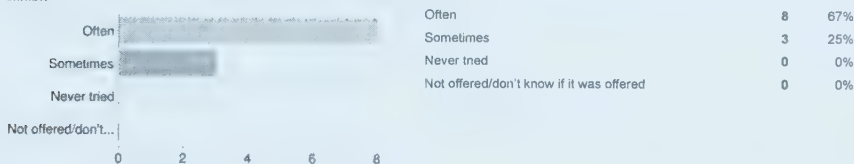
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Experience exhibits on your own



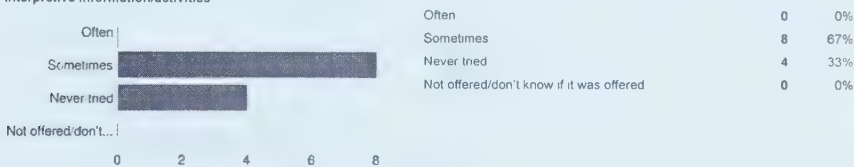
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Printed visitor guides or pamphlets



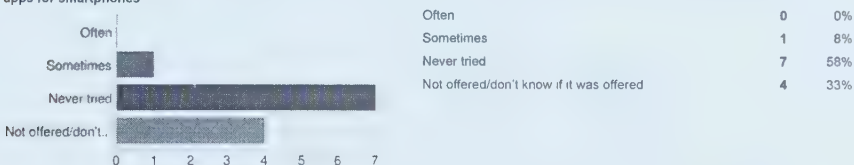
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Information panels next to the exhibit



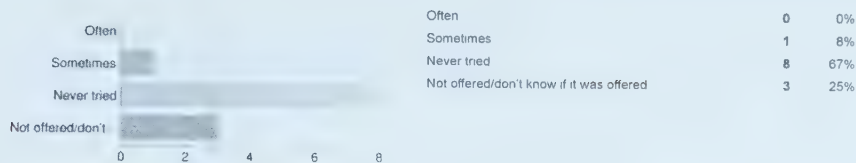
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5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Activities for mobile devices or apps for smartphones



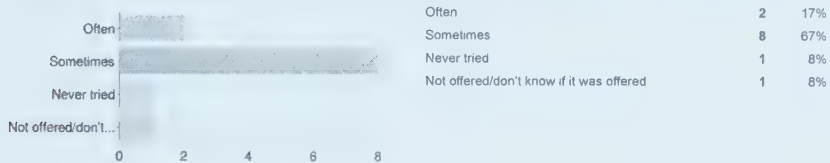
5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Social media e.g. facebook, twitter, flickr, delicious, youtube



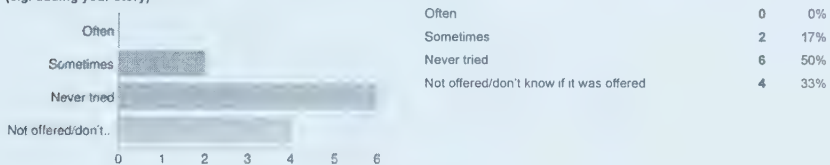
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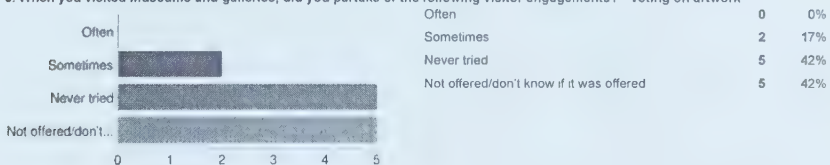
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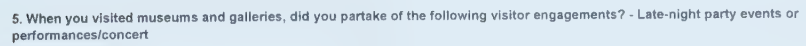
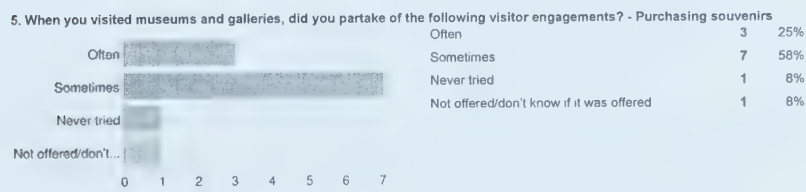
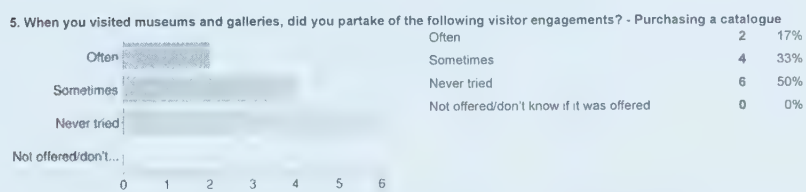
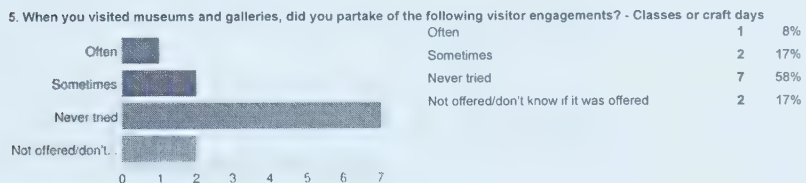
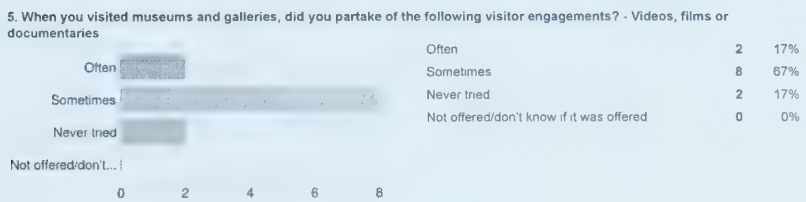
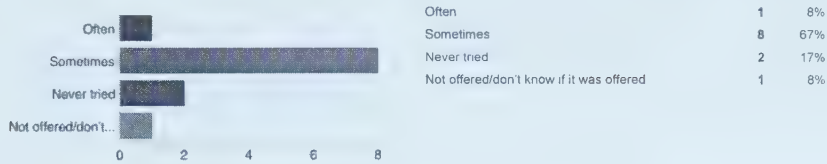
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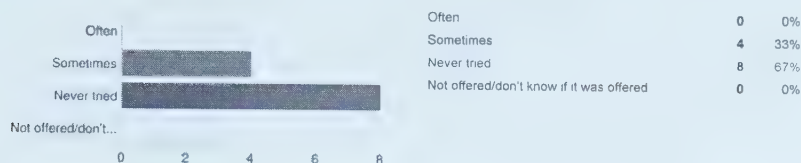


5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Voting on artwork

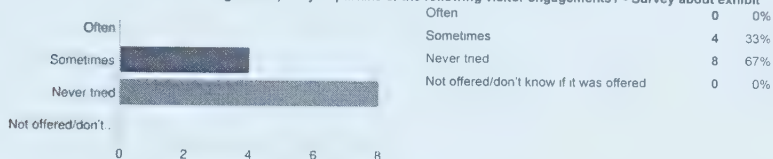


5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Lectures and artist talks





5. When you visited museums and galleries, did you partake of the following visitor engagements? - Survey about exhibit



List any other visitor engagements you used:

None
cafe,

6. If you did partake of any visitor engagements, what motivated you to do so? If you did not, why not?

Tried audio tour just for the sake of trying something different. Generally, I like to walk through a museum/gallery at my own pace and read about specific pieces that I'm interested in. Not really interested in participating in social media or video documentation aspects of museum experience - more interested in the work itself. I wanted to look at certain pieces of artwork. I like audio/ guided tours because I can learn more and get a better sense of how different artifacts in the collection relate to each other. I prefer those activities where you can follow along or engage silently, not tho

7. Were there any visitor engagements that stand out as being particularly good or enhanced your experience? If so, please describe.

I always enjoy artist talks/lectures - a little more insight into the artist's work. No. I liked the gift shops though. audio/guided tours, I really like catalogs although I have never bought one. The Design Awards at the Design Museum -- it was really great that they had everything out to actually see and interact with, especially the books. It was nice to be able to see the whole thing instead of just a few images of spreads. The Johnny Cash Project was also really great. no

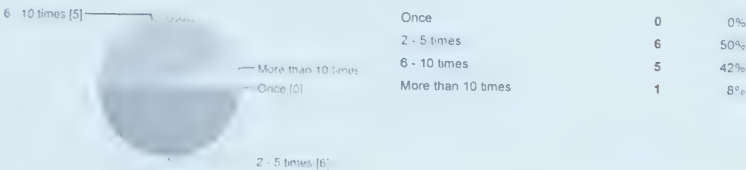
8. Were there any visitor engagements that were interactive or customizable? Was there an opportunity to participate? Please describe.

There was a video documentation opportunity in Tate open to the public to describe one's experience or talk about a specific piece - I wasn't really interested in participating due to time restriction and personal taste in museum experience. None. Once I was at an exhibition about the silk trade route and there were lots of interactive videos and objects you could feel and touch (like big jars of spices at a mock Baghdad market). I can't remember the title either of the pieces, but there was one where you could digitally throw paint at a wall, like a DIY Jackson Pollock, and also this kind of se

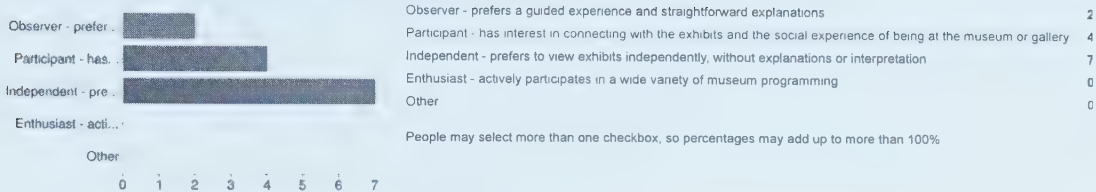
9. Did you participate? Why or why not?

I like to be independent when I am visiting a gallery. I'd rather explore myself than be guided throughout the gallery. Often in tours, they skip of pieces I'd like to look at and by the time its over I don't have enough time to view what we skipped. It's easier to just find out what I want to know by myself. Although guided tours offer interesting details that I wouldn't learn otherwise, I just don't have the patience or time. No. There were none. YEP. Yes. I loved being able to try out these things, because they were more about individual participation instead of a big show. Not interested

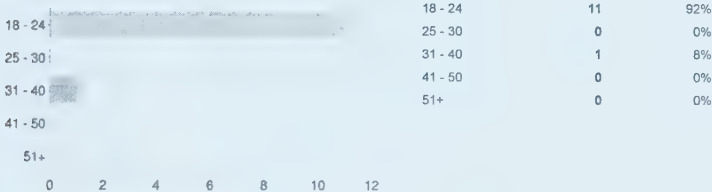
10. How often do you visit museums or galleries per year?



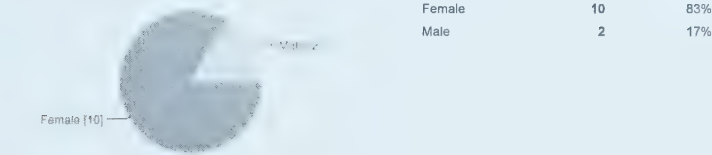
11. Would you describe yourself as any of the following types of visitor?



12. What is your age group?



13. What is your gender?



14. Additional comments:



Appendix B: Interviews

Recruitment Letter

Consent Form

Test Materials

Results

Recruitment Letter

Hello,

I am a Master of Design student and I am interested in collecting information about how you use visitor engagements through a telephone or face-to-face. The information from this interview will be coded to be anonymous.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

The interview takes 20-30 minutes to complete.

The results of this interview will be coded to be anonymous. I will audio record and transcribe the interview. After removing any identifying information, these transcripts will be assigned an arbitrary code number to ensure your anonymity. If the information collected is quoted or utilized in an MDes thesis report your anonymity will be maintained. Included with this email is an informed consent letter.

Data collected in this study will be handled in compliance with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants.

If you have any questions, you can reach me at:

Principal Investigator
Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate
Visual Communication Design, Art and Design
3-71 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta
Phone: 780 707-7259
Email: cindy.couldwell@ualberta.ca

Supervisor
Aidan Rowe
Visual Communication Design, Art and Design
3-77 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta
Phone: 780 492-8591
Email: aidan.rowe@ualberta.ca

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate, Visual Communication Design, Department of Art and Design, University of Alberta.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

Your role is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements at your institution.

The interview is approximately 20-30 minutes long. The interview survey will be coded to be anonymous. I will audio record and transcribe the interview. After removing any identifying information, these transcripts will be assigned an arbitrary code number to ensure your anonymity. If the information collected is quoted or utilized in an MDes thesis report your anonymity will be maintained.

Your confidentiality and rights

The research with this project complies with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants. Data recorded in the course of this research will be available only to myself and my supervisor. This study has been approved by the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board.

I, (please print your name) _____ acknowledge, understand, and agree to all of the following:

- I have been invited to participate in this research study.
- My participation in this study is voluntary.
- I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time with out penalty. If I choose not to participate the data collected will not be utilized.
- I have the right to my privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. My name and personal information will not appear on any materials.
- I have the right to request some or all materials released to this study be removed. The deadline to make a request to remove materials is June 30, 2011.
- All of the personal information collected here will remain confidential. Any personal identifiers will be destroyed once the thesis is published.
- I may be quoted directly in an MDes thesis, and possibly in related papers and presentations, but my anonymity will be maintained.
- Any data collected in this study will be stored in a safe and secure place.

Signature of participant _____

Date _____

If you have any questions with regards to this research project, please contact:

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Test Materials: Interview Script

[The following is the working script for the interviews. Questions may be altered during the discussion, as needed, according to information provided by the participants.]

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

1. You use the following types of visitor engagements [list from email survey]. What is the purpose of the visitor engagements?

2. Do you find any of the visitor engagements enhance your visitors' experiences? How do they benefit visitors?

3. How do they detract from visitors' experiences?

4. Are there visitor engagements tailored specifically for visitors? That is, could they be customized or personalized? If so, please describe.

Do you think customization enriches visitor experience? Why or why not?

5. Are any visitor engagements interactive? Are there opportunities for visitors to participate? Please describe.

Does interactivity or participation enhance visitor experience? Why or why not?

6. Do visitors or community members create their own visitor engagements, outside of your organization? If so, please describe.

7. What constraints prevent you from creating or enhancing visitor engagements?

8. Is there a specific visitor engagement that is/was particularly successful? If so, please describe.

Results: Transcriptions

Interview 1

"I think that it has to do with the base idea of considering the public as a space for public art. If you look at the history of art, it was traditionally exhibited indoors. And then eventually, through various art movements, artists began rejecting the white cube gallery space."

Lascaux caves in France, prehistoric, very first types of communication were linked to public art. "Creating a picture of who you were and putting it out there. That's where the link comes from the artist and the community and the physical public space. Even if it's not content driven by the community, it is with them in mind as audience."

Relational aesthetics, including the response of the public as part of their methodology (co-design)

Virtual, temporary

Community, considered as impetus or eventual audience

Seattle, Portland, Vancouver: public art apps

East Vancouver – Ken Lum, symbolizes the community
the artist chose the site, % for art projects are linked to development so artwork needs link to site
not often the city says you pick the site, East Vancouver didn't have a lot of public art
talk about social issues, brings out questions
community questions, and reflects and creates discussions

Difficulty of public art, the word public, it's really a theoretical

public is a collection of individuals

who is the public?

is it those who see it in its lifetime, the virtual public, anyone who can experience it in any of its forms, video, photo on internet

"If you take the city, and we know the city is changing all the time so you have a non-static site with an undefined location and an undefined public and then you try and curate art for it, how do you do that? And how do you measure the success for that? How do you really provide interpretive programming and support for it?" "It's not easy and it's not something you want to define. I think the undefined part of it is really interesting."

The derive tour + public lectures

database showing relationships

Want platforms with which we engage in public, also the platforms for artists, e.g. temporary public art

Project on how you see public spaces, swimming pool Art's Birthday – "placing art as a transitory intervention into a non-traditional site for art" video sound dance

Store front cinema nights, platform of the street

Designed interactive spy game, consider the public as a space

City as a platform

Exploring the art in the city is not different from exploring the general aesthetics in the city, methodology is the same, see things differently

Allow people to shift perspectives through the tool of didactic, etc

"You become over familiar with your neighbourhoods and you think you see everything but you don't and you also neglect that one basic fact which is that the city is always changing. You think that you know your neighbourhood but you don't because it's never static. And it's not controlled by one person; it's not even controlled by the city corporate entity."

% for public art – mandated by the city

from a project manager – finish the project and then put the art in, but when is the city ever done – "You notify me when the city and then I'll put the art in." The city is never done.

Didactic materials, put in the art

"There is absolute value inherent in art whether or not someone experiences it. And that is absolutely true in any art context or market principle. If you lock a Van Gogh in a closet for 150 years and not let anyone see it, it still has value."

"A lot of public artwork doesn't exist without the context of the site."

Plop art – discrete artworks that could anywhere, not dependent or related to the site, put it doesn't affect it

"The context will affect the artwork."

"With social media, the ability to process information without a guide or indicated method for them has museums changing."

Contemporary Museum of Art in Denver – Museum as Body Electric

math tour, obsessed with finishing it - most engaged

4 different types based on perspective learning, sign out 4 different didactic learning guides

hand held, match image of artwork with text, sound, rapper made an album, listen to as you move through the gallery – tempo and rhythm

interesting way to curate public art

appeal to learning style

Van Abbey, Ivanhoe – 4 types, flaneur, explorer

Galleries respond to pressure to show they are responding to the need to entertain and guide, can't just put out the work and you figure it out
need to create an experience

“Public art is important from a democratic point of view. If you’re going to be a democratic city in a modern civilization, you need to show a non-homogeneous, non-dictatorial collection of art to prove that you are open to new ideas and thoughts in a contemporary society. I don’t know it’s necessary that you have to provide ways of interacting but it helps to get a response. But I also wouldn’t want that type of programming to affect the type of artwork.”

GPS track your path through the gallery and then print it off
geocaching tour, individualized and customized
choose your own adventure

Flaneur, derive, city as aesthetic
Neighbourhoods as having line and forms
superimpose another city’s map on your city

Write your own didactic information
subverting the top-down institutional authority, defile institution mainstay
Van Abbey, Play

Van Abbemuseum, Play exhibition

“The didactic play is what they tell what the artwork was and this was a literal chance where you could physically write your own and put it on the artwork tag. It was a way of subverting the museum experience that top-down institutional bureaucratic way of experiencing museums. It was basically saying you can defile on of our institutional mainstays.”

Public art soundtrack

Audio – rhythm of the beat, not anyone one soundtrack would work, certain types of music that would make your interaction more memorable

Chelsea Boaz does her own documentation of public art
big things tours on their own, find all the big things
the city chase where

Constraints – safety

Loops, small mini tours, more localized in their normal pathways – not too far off their regular route

Lots of public art in the suburbs

Interview 2

Arts community struggles with educating the community about arts
preaching to the converted

AGA – booking agent for travelling shows, not actively involved in the local artist community
we got what we wanted

Now part of the entertainment industry, in competition with the entertainment industry

Role of the institution w/ regards to community: not artists, it's the general public professional context in which to see the artist's work

This gallery – art as more educating

L53 – benefit the local community by showing local artists + art (from elsewhere) that locals should see
favour local artists
show variety role

In school students don't get enough training on how to be a professional artist

The Works, Artwalk – quantity over quality

Museums want to get everyone in, through the door
Appeal to the masses

Prefer flavour, dust covered dinosaur bones, decayed signage, raider of the lost ark vernacular
more of a reflection of how we think about these things

Prefer fewer people who love it vs lots who kind of like it
large numbers of people keep the doors open

Artists' point of view: a show didn't happen unless there's documentation
Arts admin picks up a catalogue and the show gets noticed
why we give so much weight to publications

Constraints: money

Need to nurture a young writing community, L53 writer in residence, monograph

Mary Beth Laviollette – Calgary arts writer, makes Calgary noticed
Alberta Art Chronicle

Carolyn Sale
How to read a dinosaur – book

Boulow – sociologist

Art gallery extending its cultural capital to the artist

Interview 3

Role of institution: "Institutions should always be thinking of their audience whether their collection, whether they're exhibiting, whether they're researching."

Because not only do the organizations need to be relevant for funding, but importantly and more philosophically, they need to remain relevant because if you're collecting what a few elite think is important, then what is the point

"We're here to serve a greater good. Not just to preserve heritage and culture and art but to showcase it and engage people with it, from all different levels, from brightening people's lives to encouraging and enabling dialogue to promoting stronger intercultural understanding."

The end game of archeology is to end racism

"Museums, on a social and environmental level, should be working towards a greater justice and equality."

"Almost all of the galleries have a public gathering space. It's not just all exhibits; there's space for interaction."
when that doesn't exist the audience is being neglected

Bring lunches and feel welcomed, need to cater to people's comfort and safety, if you don't you can't expect them to engage

School programs, pre-developed. Some are open, language arts

Public programs depend largely on public funding, the funder may define where it's used, restraints of the funding
funding for public programming has fallen

Constraints: funding that limits scope,

Repatriation of objects, lose object but the net gain of knowledge from the community

Need more space for to display artifacts

Half the requests for programs is in aboriginal culture

Looking beyond museums for visitor engagements
creative writing, workshops
serve community

Interdisciplinary – arts + agriculture, gardens

New programs are integrative, cross-disciplinary, with a creative component
trying to get display space for work created by students, not just a bulletin board
generating content for the exhibits, panel text written by participants – proposing it –
co-design/co-creators

Interview 4

"It's about being creative, and I think that's not a bad thing because if a granting agency is going to give you a lump sum of money then you get to choose what to do with it and you set those priorities."

"I think it's also about how institutions choose to engage with audiences because that's changing. Audience was often previously defined as those people who come through the doors, and it's not always that anymore. Your audience could be people who actually never come in through your doors. So whenever you do programming, whether it's offsite programming or online programming, they'll engage too."

Blog activated, becomes a dialogue

"A lot of times with online presence, we have this feeling that for a dialogue to occur there has to be two-way communication but often what I think happens with websites and blogs is that, with exception of Twitter, people will reblog or they'll comment. But often with blogs people are not responding but they are not responding online.

I think we invest in blogs... but people aren't responding, but it's that they're not responding online. We they are reading it, they are absorbing it and they are talking to other people about it.

Their discussion is disjointed. Other ways of analyzing who interacts with the blog. And a lot of people don't even live here.

"If you're too broad you don't do anything well."

The AGA took on a bigger chunk, responsible for all of Alberta. It would be great if all the institutions talked about the ecosystem and figured out the gaps.

"We want to be a city where artists choose to stay." "They are a really strong litmus test of a community, and creativity and thoughtfulness. And if you have artists that are choosing to stay here yet producing work beyond Alberta then it raises the bar for all of the other artists that are here. And it's important to have people that are able to challenge that and say no, that's not good enough. We need to strive higher."

Commercial galleries that push things

UofA could do more, student gallery + research gallery
feeds into art history, curatorial studies
different thought about things

What are artists-run centres doing, where are we missing the boat

Understand what communities it serves
(and deliver on that understanding)
is it enough, need to serve more? Engage more

Constraints – patience, this is gonna take 3 years
Looking at having a roadmap

"The constraints though is often the city itself. I think Edmonton is in many ways tremendously isolated and I don't know why. I think it's just our geographical location but there isn't a strong connection to Calgary, there isn't a strong connection to Regina or Saskatoon or any other prairie city that's not that far away. It's almost like Edmonton has this dome."

Winnipeg, strong provincial, strong writing community
bordercrossings – national and international stage, generate interest

Provincial government has not had an investment

Emerging artists, some middle level artists, 1 or 2 senior level artists in that they get shows through Canada and internationally and people in any city are familiar with their work,

Curious why we have less, why no mentoring, what is the support system there. Is it that people go somewhere else? Difficult to have a career in this city as a visual artist

“There’s a real wave coming over this city, I’m going to choose to stay here. What’s great about Edmonton is almost anyone can have access to almost anyone else. And I think while the community is critical, they are supportive of their fellow artists.”

Not lots of jealousy, not a lot of rigour – just not good enough

Not a participator, independent
Prefer to maneuver on their own

Audience engagement tours are often for the uninitiated
apart from opera, people are terrified of art
afraid someone will ask their opinion
lacking the visual literacy

“We as a society are much more visually literate than we’ve been before. We understand symbols and colour and typography.”

Latitude 53 is very artist centred
what are the points of entry into the work
sometimes that artist is I make it and it’s the audience job to find point of entry
sometimes not

Audiences like subtle prompts
kids are smart and inquisitive
the adults are difficult

Art is codified how we view it
not allowed close to the work

Not our job not to censor it, that’s a community

Entitle

“That’s a community thing. If someone wrote ‘slutbucket’ and someone came in they wrote over it and wrote over it and wrote beautiful flowers and someone else came in and grrr, that’s the joy of the piece. They have that control.”

“We all self-censor.”

AGA doesn’t censor a lot. A decency spectrum

“Museums and galleries should be places that anger you or stimulate you or excite you or challenge you. So maybe the idea should be if you’re offended by idea please enter with caution.”

Library

“Artistic institutions are the same as knowledge institutions like the libraries and museums and other places, it’s important that there is that freedom to explore but there is the role of institution to find out and articulate what their parameters and what their audience is.”

Appendix C: Workshops

Recruitment Letter

Consent Form

Test Materials

Results

Recruitment Letter

Hello [Instructor Name],

I am a Master of Design student and I am interested in collecting information about visitor engagements through a workshop with your class.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

The workshop will be 30-45 minutes long. I will explain my research and ask seven main questions (see attached) to start a discussion. I will ask your students to complete an exercise.

I will take photographs during the exercise and collect the exercise from the students (with permission from the students). Students may opt out of photographs and handing in the exercise. They have the option of adding their names to exercise so they can receive credit for their ideas or remain anonymous.

If you have any questions, you can reach me at:

Principal Investigator
Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate
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Phone: 780 707-7259
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Supervisor
Aidan Rowe
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Phone: 780 492-8591
Email: aidan.rowe@ualberta.ca

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate, Visual Communication Design, Department of Art and Design, University of Alberta.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

Your role in this workshop is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements at your institution. You will be asked to complete an exercise. With permission, I will take your exercise for further study. You may add your name to the exercise or remain anonymous. I will take photos during the exercise and you may opt out.

The session will be approximately 30 minutes long and will be audio recorded and transcribed. After removing any identifying information, these transcripts will be assigned an arbitrary code number to ensure your anonymity. If the information collected is quoted or utilized in an MDes thesis report your anonymity will be maintained.

Given the nature of the face-to-face discussion of a workshop session, complete anonymity is not possible. All workshop participants are asked not to share the content of others' comments outside of the workshop meeting.

Your confidentiality and rights

The research with this project complies with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants. Data recorded in the course of this research will be available only to myself and my supervisor. This study has been approved by the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board.

I, (please print your name)_____ acknowledge, understand, and agree to all of the following:

- I have been invited to participate in this research study.
- My participation in this study is voluntary.
- I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time with out penalty. If I choose not to participate the data collected will not be utilized.

- I have the right to my privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. My name and personal information will not appear on any materials.
 - I have the right to request some or all materials released to this study be removed. The deadline to make a request to remove materials is June 30, 2011.
 - All of the personal information collected here will remain confidential. Any personal identifiers will be destroyed once the thesis is published.
 - I may be quoted directly in an MDes thesis, and possibly in related papers and presentations, but my anonymity will be maintained.
 - Any data collected in this study will be stored in a safe and secure place.
-
- ☐ You have my permission to use the exercise I complete for this study.
 - ☐ You have my permission to connect my name with the exercise in written or visual presentations related to this study.
 - ☐ You have my permission to take photos of me.
 - ☐ You have my permission to connect my name with an image of me in written or visual presentations related to this study.

Signature of participant _____

Date _____

If you have any questions with regards to this research project, please contact:

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Test Materials: Workshop Script

Introduction

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community. This research will investigate how individualized engagements affect visitor experiences and learning, and how this approach may be utilized by the cultural institution or created by the community.

About Consent

This workshop is voluntary.

Audio recorded, coded for anonymity.

I'll take photos. Check the line to say photos are OK.

I'll take away the exercise. Check the line to say that's OK. Add your names if you like for credit in my thesis.

Is everyone over 18?

I have two scenarios to discuss. We will break out in to groups, discuss the scenarios, and then regroup so we can discuss the results..

Results

Workshop: Tagging

GPS Tagging

An electronic device can be installed on an object, such as a piece of artwork or an exhibit item, to enable one to track its location and collect various data through GPS technology.

Let's say museums and galleries are using GPS tracking technology. How could you, as members of the general public, use the GPS tracking technology?

Mind Map 1

Navigation

- > Find exactly what you want quickly
- > Get around

Map out your tour (plan your own

- > Individualization of museum experience

Transport (moving sidewalks that take you through you tour)

- > Quick, effective – like Futurama tubes
- > Fun!
- > Maybe safety issues

Genius

- > If you like the Mona Lisa you might like...

Moving exhibit

- > Following the exhibit like a world tour/travelling circus
- > Follow group or individual pieces

Hide and seek

- > Pieces move around
- > Scavenger hunt – like the Da Vinci Code

Crime/theft

- > Find stolen objects

GPS for groups

- > Track students, children

Mind Map 2

Maps

Social friend finding

Tracking

- > Koala, sharks, dino bones
- > Art tracking - Know where it is globally, your location in relation to art, finding

way around gallery

- > Space art, orbits, track where it is, phone, quantum communicators, pictures in space

- > Moving art

- > GPS location

- > Artwork hotline

- > Art identification

- > Ghost walking

- > Sushi bar

- > Story of their jet set lives

- > Dino bones

Geocaching

- > treasure hunt

Geo photos

- > Google maps with real time street view

- > Artificial simulations of gallery

Telephones

- > Call art – voicemail, Mona Lisa convo

- > Art talks!

iPhone

- > See where everything is

On Star

- > Vehicles

- > Moving art – sushi bar art

- > Tom Tom – robot uprising, send robot to museums

- > Hologram in museum where art is

Distress signal

- > Anti-theft for art

- > Art is damaged

Kids

- > Games, match game, Tom Tom Jr, robot kids, puzzle, scavenger hunt

Mind Map 3

Global

- > People who don't really like art galleries/think art is boring

- > Art outside of the gallery

- > Art distributed

- > Art Amazing Race, reality show

Website

- > Go to a GPS location instead of going to the gallery

Map

- > Places

- > Paper
- > Hardcopy
- > Digital

Finding things

- > Trackings
- > Riddle, puzzle
- > Map
- > Treasure hunt
- > Clues

Coordinates

- > Universal
- > Location
- > Latitude, longitude, degrees
- > Regulate

Cell phone

- > iPhone app, Blackberry
- > Google maps
- > Technology
- > GPS, dogs, animals, 007

Satellite

- > Waves
- > Computer
- > Signals
- > Anywhere in the world

Location

- > Anywhere in the world

Information

- > Commentary
- > Too much technology
- > Lack of privacy
- > Ethics

Geocaching

- > Treasure hunt
- > Website

Talking and Tagging

Mind Map 1

Interaction wall showing random tags, as you walk past, you can touch the tags, which transfer them to your device, which helps you find art that way

- > Combine tags to show items which shared ones, e.g. “quirky” + “cats”

Popular tags

Tags suggest webs of similar tags

Holograms

- > As you said in a word, similarly tagged artwork would be marked with some sort of hologram (viewable with glasses)
- > with the glasses, tags would be visible surrounding art pieces

People/Actors as “tags”

- > Actors could discuss topics a piece is tagged with
- > People wearing shirts with tags

Handheld device

- > Proximity to art piece displays tags which then can be selected and show definitions, similar art pieces, etc.

Tagging is reactive

- > Not necessarily information to educate
- > Good for rough sorting
- > No time? Pick the art with the tags you like!

Mind Map 2

Human connection

- > Hearing a human voice
- > Reassurance

Democratizing

- > Popular
- > Not just “expert” opinions

Categorization

- > Organization of exhibit
- > Personal opinions

Education

- > History
- > Interpretation

Directing tours

- > Guided tour
- > Self-directed

Listen to recordings

- > Personal, wireless
- > Speakers

Mind Map 3

Accessibility

- > Wayfinding system by tags
- > Mobility impaired audio tour

Interactivity

- > Virtual tour organized by tag
- > Online database

Exhibits

- > Welcome panel listing categories
- > Ambient conversation exhibit

Organization

- > Groupings by topic
- > Sort by preference

Promotion

- > Ads based tags specific to a certain audience
- > Booth outside of location that would sort by tag

Priority

- > Best match search results

Activities

- > Scavenger hunt
- > Create your own tour based on tags

Objects

- > Stickers to post by each work tagging it

Workshop: Public Art Documentation, Transcription of Notes

Canada Post mailboxes

Construction (unintentional public art), two examples

CKUA image: "I know you don't really notice it at first."

"Some things you can see it as a piece of art but some people might not see it as that so it was interesting to look at things and evaluate whether it was legitimate or not."

"I really looked around more and thought about it, where usually I wouldn't."

"There wasn't a whole lot there, just a lot of parking lots."

Huge mural by Josh Holinaty, "spreading the green love"

Chez Pierre mural: "kind of creepy"

"I don't really know what the context was."

"It kind of feels like they're saying 'we're the government and we support art so we're going to stick this outside of our building' but it's cool that's it's there."

"There wasn't a whole lot."

“Anything where I thought it was worth going out of way to see it.”

“if it wasn’t for business purposes”

“Everything I hadn’t seen before. I’m not from Edmonton. I wasn’t expecting as much stuff that I found. There’s where more than I thought.”

Graffiti will be taken away eventually

Commissioned by The Works

“It’s probably not meant to be public art but I really like the old signage. I accidentally noticed when I looked up and there were these old signs all over the building.” Type on the Philips Building

Advertising for mini storage

“something out of the ordinary”

“the ones with text remind me more of design”

One student completed the assignment in -28 degrees

“It made my look up. I didn’t really notice that stuff before. It made me look at different places in Edmonton and think ‘oh, Edmonton has that.’ That’s cool.”

“I approached this area as some things that I knew where public art and some things that were unintentional art.”

Commercial art, corporate places, advertising stands

“Here is some unintentional art... I found that to be really interesting.”

Edmonton Journal building, child-made art

Antique piece in the Journal building

“It’s very sparse. I avoided the commercial buildings because they had more of a purpose and they didn’t really bring art into the area.”

Pretty boring sections, used to be good

“Capital City Cleanup, there’s so many things that I would always think of as cool bits of graffiti and now they’re all gone.”

Did not do every tag, graffiti

Utility boxes

Classic sign “The reason I took a photo of this is I feel it’s design turned into art where I’m not sure of it’s purpose except as a landmark.” biz

Whyte Avenue depicted but not at its location, like the artist didn’t get the box they wanted

“I tried to do something that was an individual’s footprint on an area.”

“For me public art is an afterthought; it’s added to a space to compliment it because if it’s integrated from the beginning then it’s almost architecture, which has its own value.”

“It renewed my anger towards Capital City Cleanup.”

Never took a close look at utility boxes

Clowns, utility box, art walk clown is creepy with the eye brows

People in historic costumes next to people with tattoos

“This is my favourite box because it confuses me.”

“Someone put a sticker over the cat’s face.”

“I took a picture of the entrance to Devine because everyone needs more robots.” biz

“This one is huge but I’ve never really looked at it.” (the kokane one at old gas station)

“Awesome horse.”

“I pretty much took pictures of anything. I also had pictures of historic buildings but that was before I actually got to my section.”

“I didn’t come across anything I hadn’t seen before which probably means I’ve spent way too much time on Whyte Ave.” There’s certainly some that I looked at closer.”
impact

“I know it’s not art in a textbook sense but I think it’s beautiful so I included it.” type

Boxes

Margaret Martin Residence

“Considered the plaque part of public art because it was nicely engraved.”

On house “Had taken a bunch of paintings and stuck them in their tree.”

“I definitely considered it more. Looking at the boxes, I’ve seen them before but I didn’t really care about them.” impact

Two murals on 80th ave, historical: “It’s interesting there’s the old Albert’s and Scales and Tails so it’s like documenting history.”

“I didn’t do all the tags, just the tags I thought were interesting.”

“Either one or the other is interacting...” furniture

Murals painted by the Jones’

“What is really interesting is the drop downs are super well done and detailed and then in between they’ve continued the magpies throughout.”

“Fireman saving little kid” “I don’t know how many drunk people have fallen off this ladder.”

Punch outs in fence, fountain

“Apparently they re-do it every year, so somebody gets to tag it every year.”

“I’ve been up and done that alley a thousand times and I didn’t notice it until I shot it.”

“There’s interesting things to look at, like store fronts, but I don’t really consider those public art. Anything interesting and was somewhat intentful.”

“I work on this block and some many of things were outside my door so it was a chance to look at them.”

“My favourite one I couldn’t photograph because it was under snow.”

A lot of utility boxes and not much else

“I found some graffiti... it looks like it gets painted over and people keep coming back.”

Walked through back alleys, nothing too crazy

“Travelling to areas like going to Europe this past summer and being in London, you’re exposed to so much public art and so much graffiti and so much self-expression you realize that Edmonton is really lacking... maybe people don’t care, or are not risky enough, or don’t want to express themselves.” “It’s such an exciting culture I wish we had more of it. Edmonton could loosen up a bit.” “Making the city a little more colourful.”

“Walking around and looking for things is always fun but it’s so impossible to do if you’re not intentional about it.”

Crowdsourcing

“Hard to say until you see the quality from the crowdsourced”

“One down side is people may expose hidden graffiti and we may not want that” con

“If it’s good, you really don’t care where it comes from”

Participatory design

“My experience of it and what I’ve read... it’s tricky to understand people” “You have to act as a filter for design, you have to listen to stuff and based on your experience you have to decide”

Ownership in project

“I think if people are passionate about it, it tends to skew.”

Workshop: Public Art Visitor Guides and Plaques

Visitor Guides

Mind Map 1

Guide book to be picked up at central hub locations

- > Wifi

- > Collect them all! Passport visa stickers, redeem for discounts

Mapping of public art locations

- > art walk, lines/Steps/colours to follow

- > interesting, off the beaten path (alleys!)

Scanning using mobile device

- > Barcode, scanlife

- > Texting to special number for more info

Digital directory

- > Located at transit station

- > List out city information and public art

Tuning to a radio station

- > Certain station for certain areas

Mind Map 2

Scavenger hunt

Tracks movement retroactively to tell you what art you saw [GPS personal tracker]

Eyeball recognition

- > "Downloads" into your head

- > Surfs your Delicious

Satellite view

- > Google maps layer

"Token" system, you have limited amount of physical tokens and each represents a "like"

Augmented reality

- > Rendered "chronology of graffiti"

Loudspeaker

- > 1984

QR codes

Constantly updating iPad, eBook

- > Location specific

- > Foursquare-style check in

Plaques

Mind Map 1

“Green” sign

- > grass
- > made of natural organic materials

iPhone app

- > Download
- > Website

Plaque that folds out

- > a broad sheet
- > pamphlet

Post-it notes that you can take

- > Pull it off! (stickers)
- > Take it home/stick other places

Interactive

- > Moves around
- > Puzzle
- > Dig out of the ground

Plaques that mean to the viewer

- > Spit/yell
- > Grab you/point a laser beam at you

Record your voice

- > Video
- > Sound

Only show at night

- > Glow in the dark
- > Or disappears in sunlight re: Sagmeister

Mini Map 2

Integrated in ground or sidewalk

- > Projection (works on snow)
- > Physically, cement, metal, burn into grass

Audio

- > Push button
- > FM transmitter

Incorporated into art

- > Plant flowers to spell artists' name

No plaque

> Don't, why label

Guide book/tours

> Published format

Ticket/message dispenser

Online

> Bar code picture

> Search

> QR codes

> Website

> City location search

Informal (non permanent)

> Sticker/flyers (semi permanent)

> Word of mouth

Screen

> Multiple choice (win points, redeem at gift shop)

Workshop: Audio Tours and Catalogues

Audio Tours

Traditional Audio Tour

Pros	Cons
Group 1	
Group 2	
(as a visitor)	(as a visitor)

Mix'n'Match Audio Tour

Pros	Cons
Group 1	
(as visitor) -force's viewer to travel beyond usual path -choice is powerful for time, favs,	(as visitor) -missed work I really wanted to see because I didn't know its name -negating the curator's vision

assignments (as professional) - can engage a wider audience	(as professional) - viewer's aren't expected to follow the flow set up by the gallery
Group 2	
(as visitor)	

Experimental/Soundscape Audio Tour

Pros	Cons
Group 1	
(as a visitor) - draws in audience - can set mood which traditional gallery Settings don't have (as a professional) - can add another sound element if you want	(as a professional) - add's another element that artist might not want connected to their work!
Group 2	
(as visitor)	(as a visitor)

Catalogues

Traditional Catalogue

Pros	Cons
Group 1	
(as a visitor) - take away - a physical object – an artists endeavour in its own - tends to have well thought out writing (as a professional) - record keeping as an artist - prestige of being in a catalogue - can travel - is permanent	(as a visitor) - expensive - environmentally wasteful - easily out-dated (as a professional) - extra funding to produce

Group 2	
(as visitor) - physical record you can keep - people have put a great deal of thought and care into it	(as a visitor) - no localized content/feedback

Print-on-Demand Catalogue

Pros	Cons
Group 1	
(as a visitor) - custom (as a professional) - join artistic communities	(as a visitor) - assumes homogeneity in audience - doesn't give outside points of view (as a professional) - same as above
Group 2	
(as visitor) - localized content - localized language (as a professional) - greater variety of point of view	(as a visitor) - costs more - less content, less substantial (as a professional) - one's work won't get featured internationally

eBook Catalogue

Pros	Cons
Group 1	
(as a visitor) - cheap - efficient - somewhat interactive (as a professional) - cheap - can update and change text/image - easier to share information	(as a visitor) - you need an eBook reader - costly - always needs updating and maintenance - not a physical object (as a professional) - expensive if you have to buy them - content less polished - breakable

Group 2	
(as visitor) - cheaper production cost - include localized content (different versions)	(as a visitor) - alienating if you can't afford the device - good when technology is more ubiquitous (as a professional) - fleeting and ephemeral

Appendix D: Artifacts

Consent Form

Test Materials

Results

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Cindy Couldwell, MDes Candidate, Visual Communication Design, Department of Art and Design, University of Alberta.

Cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries and zoos, utilize visitor engagements, in conjunction with the exhibits, to deliver interpretive and contextual information. These visitor engagements include activities (such as tours, lectures, and classes) and items (such as catalogues, visitor guides, and souvenirs).

The objective of this thesis research is to develop an approach on how to design and implement visitor engagements that are unique, personal and customizable, for the purpose of enriching the visitor's experience of the exhibit and enhancing dialogue within the community.

Your role is to share your opinions about, and some of your observations on, visitor engagements, and a mobile website.

The session will be approximately 10 minutes long and is anonymous.

Your confidentiality and rights

The research with this project complies with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants. Data recorded in the course of this research will be available only to myself and my supervisor. Questions about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the University of Alberta Research Ethics Office at telephone number (780) 492-2615.

I, (please print your name _____) acknowledge, understand, and agree to all of the following:

- I have been invited to participate in this research study.
 - My participation in this study is voluntary.
 - I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time with out penalty. If I choose not to participate the data collected will not be utilized.
 - I have the right to my privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. My name and personal information will not appear on any materials.
 - I have the right to request some or all materials released to this study be removed. The deadline to make a request to remove materials is September 5, 2011.
 - All of the personal information collected here will remain confidential. Any personal identifiers will be destroyed once the thesis is published.
 - I may be quoted directly in an MDes thesis, and possibly in related papers and presentations, but my anonymity will be maintained.
 - Any data collected in this study will be stored in a safe and secure place.
-

Signature of participant _____

Date _____

If you have any questions with regards to this research project, please contact

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Test Materials: Survey Questions for the Art and Design Mobile Website

Have you ever wandered around and discovered something interesting, like public art, graffiti.

This app affords you the ability to document it. Would you like to document those discoveries?

Would you learn more about public art and design through the app?

How do you feel to be invited to participate in documenting public art and design in Edmonton?

What do you think of crowdsourced vs topdown approach? Do you prefer a curated site (top-down) or one where others can contribute?

Censorship/report this image - should it be done, who should moderate?

There's an option to discuss works. Should that be included?

Likes, the idea of popularity. Should that be included?

I want to allow the user to make a collection or set of artworks. Sets? Selections? Collections?

Does Artworks convey it is the collection or catalogue?

Observations: *Entitle* Artifact

Stood back from the screen, didn't always approach the instructions

Didn't know about QR codes

Picked up cards, I handed out cards

More interaction during patio, camaraderie, sharing of ideas and devices

Marginalized if no phone, I informed they could do it at home

Some wanted time to think

Some really enjoyed

Articles by the press – stated positive feedback

Conversation about self-censoring: writing to a projection on the screen differs from writing to the internet, even though it's anonymous, still more public

One person spoke to another through the interface “mom”

Astute naming

Off-the-cuff, whimsical naming, lighthearted

Results: Artist Responses to Entitle

"After reviewing the titles, did contributions from the audience cause you to recontextualize your piece or think about it differently? Why or why not?"

Response 1

ANSWER: Not really. If anything the proposed titles reinforced my intentions and provided feedback which illustrated that the object (which i might add is interactive) was being received as intended. More than one or two were obvious jokes which I didn't take very seriously. Some commented on how the work was being "mistreated" (i.e. people putting jackets on the surface). One commenter "Strathaniel" in particular was puzzling in that the participant used a direct phrase from the Yeats entry on Wikipedia.org....why?

Overall there weren't really enough titles to provide a yes or no response.

1. Do I have your permission to use your response in my thesis research? (Answer yes or no.)

ANSWER: Yes

2. Do I have your permission to associate your response with your name in my thesis research? (Answer yes to allow me to quote you by name or no to remain anonymous.)

ANSWER: Yes

Response 2

Re your question, I'm not sure whether every audience contribution has made me recontextualise my piece, though there's a couple of responses I think make me think more about audience type rather than about the work itself, which in itself is interesting. I think that the "Thanks dead men for making my life easy" is a glib, perhaps insightful (but quite depressing) response, and "a funny thing happened..." and "I think I forgot my bag" perhaps relates to the ease of travel, or the lack of thought or preparation with which we can still make journeys nowadays - I wonder if the namers knew of the expeditions I documented and how significant (in the history of the colonisation of North America) and arduous they were - if they did it would add another dimension to their naming. It would be interesting to engage with the namers more about their thoughts behind their naming - what the work made them think of, whether the naming came from liking or disliking the work.

Response 3

The alternative titles that the audience gave my work didn't really make me recontextualize my piece, as I found most of them to be rather lighthearted. If

anything, these made me think of reasons why sometimes even when we (and I do include myself in that) attend an artistic event and view artworks, we remain very closed to the possibilities they offer us, and browse through as if in a mall, dealing not with ideas but with products, which are to be judged skin-deep by their appearance.

The ones I thought were posted by people who either understood the work better, had seen it and thought about it or perhaps even liked it, all had to do with the basic shapes that were created during the first and performative stage of the artwork. They were the ones rotating around the square shapes depicted, which is in line with the minimalist approach I have when it comes to giving a title to my work, and I liked it.

Either way it is always interesting to get feedback, and since in this case due to geographical constraints I couldn't be present in the exhibition, the only feedback I got was through your project, and I will take my time to rethink what these people meant and hypothesize on what they thought of my work. Thank you for that opportunity and for mixing all the works together as part of your work.

You can use both my answer and my name in your thesis.

Response 4

In answer to your question, the titles contributed by viewers via your project did not significantly change the way I think about my audio recording, Reconstituted Dialogue. There are a few reasons:

Your project presented a platform, which allowed viewers to actively participate in the exhibition by re-titling, and thereby re-contextualizing, artworks presented at Latitude 53. However, I see this idea of active participation as being confined to your project - that is, a viewer who contributes an alternate title for another exhibited artwork, adds it to your project, while the supposedly re-named artwork continues to be presented in the gallery as it was prior to the contribution of the alternate title.

It seems to me that what is fundamental to Entitle is an idea about art that Marcel Duchamp referred to in 1957 as the "Art Coefficient", wherein he suggested that the creation of meaning in a work of art is never wholly under the control of the artist. The artist presents an artwork as a sort of proposal, which then requires acknowledgment from an audience. From this interaction, meaning and context are attributed to the artwork. Perhaps a project like Entitle can help to raise an audience's awareness of the contextualizing potential of their role.

If I recall correctly, participants were able to submit titles via the Entitle website, with the possibility of having experienced the exhibition in person only briefly, partially, distractedly (for example, during the opening reception) or although unlikely, not at all. I suspect that the reference images on your website played a significant part in affecting title contributions. Particularly with my project, the title Ozone contributed by "Detroit", stands out to me more likely as a response to the visual composition of the reference image on the website than the audio recording as presented at Latitude 53. By the way you've designed your project, this is an interesting and subtle quirk,

which results from a layer of mediation that may have been overlooked by many of your participants.

Finally, I have a question for you: was it a conscious decision on your part not to include Entitle in the list of works that were available for re-titling on the project website?

Regarding permissions: yes you may use and quote the above response in your research, and you may use my name in relation to this response.

Response 5

The contributions seemed to be split into two categories. First were titles that evoked aspects of our work, yet were more ambiguous than the original. These included "Solitude in Silence", "Study Hall", "Taking Inventory", "Modern Bondage", "Restricted", and "The Cubicle". These titles reinforced ideas we were exploring, and focused on the feeling of alienation. The second category were humorous captions that read like a review. These included "I wish I had a pet hamster so I would not feel", "High Ho Because the Internet Tells Me So!", "Butt Folders", "pretty nice chair", "Wikipedia's a bitch to reference", and "gottagotoworkgottahaveajob". Although these titles show a certain understanding, the sardonic tone suggests a critique in the form of a title.

The contributions highlighted existing strengths and weaknesses of the work as we understood it, and therefore did not cause us to recontextualize the work.

1. Do I have your permission to use your response in my thesis research? (Answer yes or no.)

Yes

2. Do I have your permission to associate your response with your name in my thesis research? (Answer yes to allow me to quote you by name or no to remain anonymous.)

Response 6

My immediate reaction is to say no, the titles from the audience did NOT cause me to recontextualize my piece. In reading the titles I had the strong sense that those participating in the exercise did it with very little conscious thought, an immediate reaction to something they did not understand. I can't help but wonder if the ease of the method of communication (texting) lends itself to thoughtlessness and a general disconnectedness from the work and the observer's surroundings.

By all means! Please use my response in your research!! As for my name, I'm hesitant to say yes (I'm in some ways private, eschewing Facebook, etc) but I'm going to say yes because I feel like such a SCHMUCK for taking so long to get back to you.



